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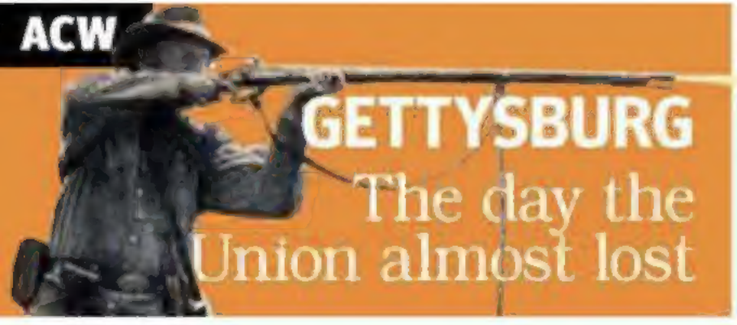

GETTYSBURG
The day the Union almost lost

WWII

BIRTH OF THE RED DEVILS
Bruneval: the British Paras' first victory

WWII

GATES OF INDIA
The forgotten army's epic struggle at Imphal, 1944

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ON THE COVER:
Was this the weapon that killed the king? The facial reconstruction of King Richard III sits beside the possible murder-weapon.

Photos Alamy Images; University of Leicester

Welcome

By Dr Neil Faulkner

The historical accounts of Bosworth are scanty, yet miles of print have been published on the battle that founded the Tudor dynasty and launched England into the modern world. Is there really anything more to say?

It would seem so. Archaeologists armed with metal-detectors have scoured the battlefield and established that it was not fought where everyone assumed. Other archaeologists have dug up the remains of the defeated Yorkist king and used them to provide a blow-by-blow account of his dying moments.

Military historian Chris Skidmore, meantime, has been drilling down into the ancient sources to conjure an alternative history – indeed, to question whether we have any reliable history of the battle at all.

We have linked articles this issue summarising the new thinking about Bosworth.

Also, David Porter begins a two-part series on naval gunnery with an article tracing developments from the Armada to Trafalgar, while Julian Brazier continues his four-parter on the Battle of Gettysburg with a blow-by-blow account of the fighting on the first day.

Finally, we have two Second World War stories. Taylor Downing reports on the little-known Bruneval Raid in February 1942, Britain's first successful paratroop operation, and our long-running British Army series ends with an analysis of Imphal, the epic defensive battle on the Burma–India border in early 1944 (though do not miss next month's epilogue, when we assess the evolution of the Army since 1945).

Neil Faulkner.

Who we are:

Military History Monthly aims to cover conflict on land, at sea, and in the air through all periods of history, with expert commentary written in an intelligent and accessible way.

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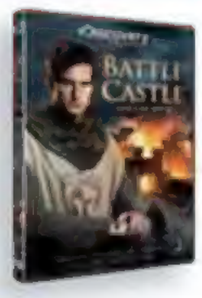

MILITARY HISTORY MONTHLY

Military History Monthly
Issue 34, July 2013
www.military-history.org

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SUBSCRIPTIONS
UK: £36.95 (12 issues) **RoW:** £46.95 (12 issues)
Back issues: £4.50 each / £5.50 non-UK (inc p&p)
Binders: (hold 12 copies) £15 / £20
Slip Cases: (hold 12 copies) £15 / £20

***Military History Monthly* Subscriptions**
Lamb House, Church Street, London, W4 2PD
Tel: 020 8819 5580 **Fax:** 020 8819 5589
subs@military-history.org
www.military-history.org/subscriptions

NEWS DISTRIBUTION
UK & Rest of World: COMAG, Tavistock Road, West Drayton, UB7 7QE **Tel:** 01895 444 055

Printed in England by William Gibbons
Military History Monthly (ISSN 2048-4100) is published monthly by Church Street Publishing Ltd, Lamb House, Church Street, London, W4 2PD

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DISPATCHES

Our round-up of this month's military history news stories.

DORNIER 17'S RECOVERY EXHIBITED

Games developer Wargaming has announced the company will be funding an exhibition at the RAF Museum to explore the museum's groundbreaking Dornier 17 recovery project. The exhibition will take place in both the London and Cosford locations of the museum.

As part of the sponsorship package, Wargaming will also build an Education Centre at Cosford. This will provide the museum's Access and Learning Department with an important resource to engage with schools and teachers in the Midlands and surrounding areas.

The grant of £75,000 will allow the museum to develop new approaches to the display and interpretation of the Dornier as it undergoes conservation. A number of exhibitions will tell the story of the Dornier, its recovery, and preservation.

At both sites the public will be able to see an augmented-reality version of the Dornier flying above the museum, giving museum guests a glimpse of the aircraft as it would have been seen in 1940. Visitors will also be able to view this through their smartphones, and through specially created viewing equipment at the museum.

The science behind the recovery and conservation of the Dornier will also be explored through a bespoke mobile app, while the new Education Centre will allow the museum to develop new education offerings, as well as creating a space where community groups and adult-education partners can take part in the Dornier experience.

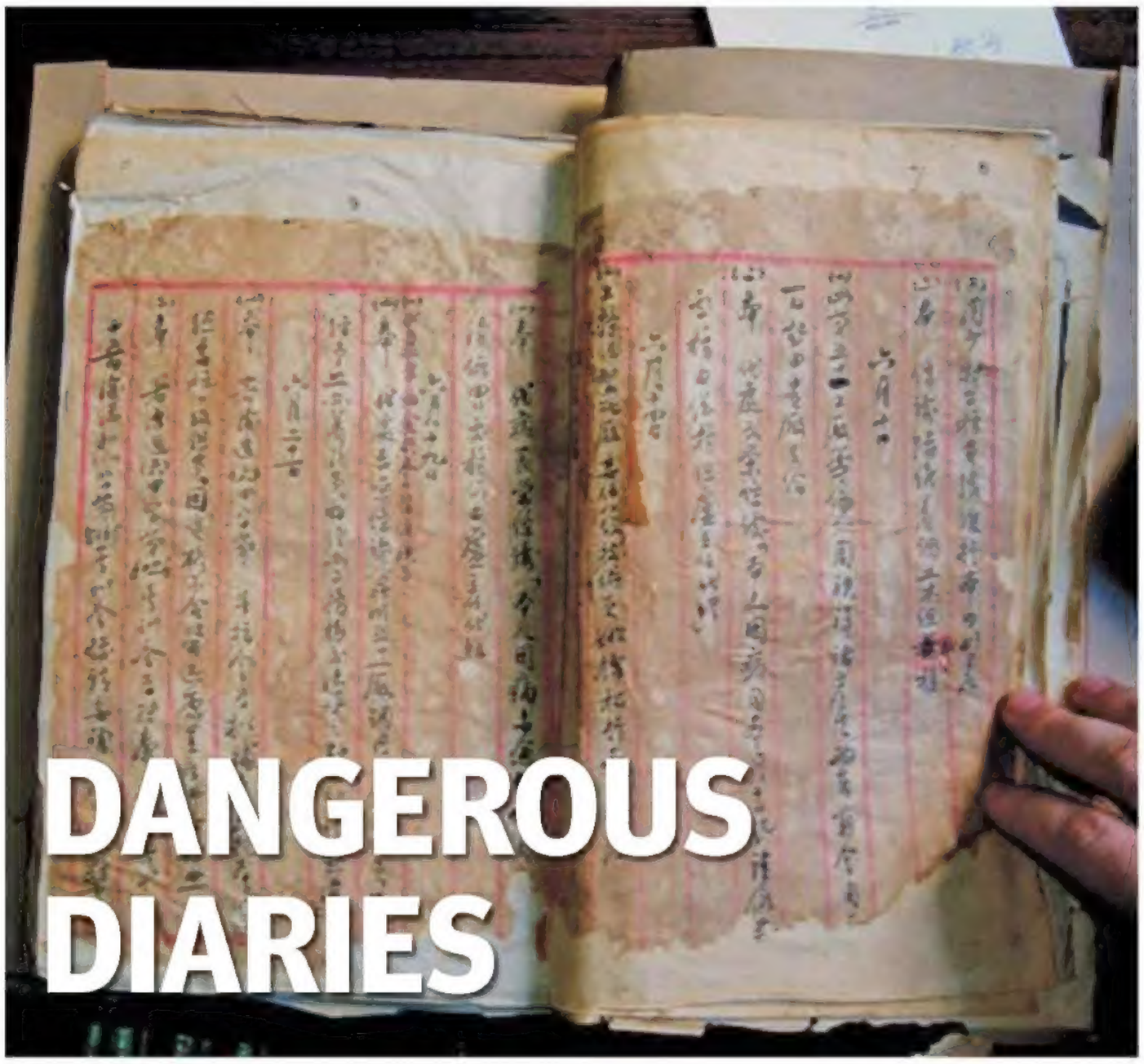
A specially developed website will showcase the social history behind the Dornier, the forensic science behind its discovery and recovery, archival footage from the museum, and have user-generated content. The website will evolve as the Dornier project progresses, functioning as an innovative hypertextual documentary for the project.

'Wargaming is passionate about military history, so we jumped at the opportunity to help be part of a truly historic endeavour,' said Victor Kislyi, CEO of Wargaming. 'The story behind the Dornier 17 is truly unique, and we're looking forward to helping share that tale at the new Education Centre at Cosford.'

Peter Dye, Director-General of the Royal Air Force museum commented, 'I am delighted that Wargaming are supporting the museum's Dornier project by funding our exciting plans to tell the story of the recovery and conservation of the Dornier 17. This is an innovative project and the support of Wargaming will allow us to tell that story in an innovative way. Augmented reality, mobile applications, and the use of user-generated content are new developments for the museum, and we are excited about exploring their possibilities.'

Behind it all is the museum's ground-breaking project that will see the retrieval of what is the only known survivor of the Luftwaffe's 'flying pencil' bomber from the Goodwin Sands, off the coast of Kent, where it crash-landed in 1940. It will take approximately three weeks – and some pioneering techniques – to complete the recovery of the aircraft, which will then be transported to the Michael Beethan Conservation Centre at RAF Museum Cosford for the next phase of the project.

The aircraft was spotted by divers in 2008. After sonar scans conducted by the museum, Wessex Archaeology, and the Port of London Authority, its identity was confirmed as the Dornier Do 17Z Werke nr. 1160.



DANGEROUS DIARIES

An historian studying WWII soldiers responsible for violent atrocities in the Far East says they were partly radicalised by their own diaries.

Dr Aaron William Moore, of the University of Manchester, has been studying the private diaries of 200 American, Chinese, and Japanese soldiers over the past ten years for a new book out next month. The diaries he tracked down were written during the eight years of 'total war', in which up to 20 million Chinese died and 2 million Japanese.

One low point was the 'Rape of Nanjing', following the Japanese capture of the former capital of the Republic of China on 13 December 1937. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians and disarmed soldiers were murdered by soldiers of the Imperial Japanese Army.

'The state did not brainwash these people into committing atrocities,' said Dr Moore. 'Rather, it was a number of factors, including their diaries, which they used to build up a rationale which normalised acts of extreme violence.'

One 1937 diary found by Dr Moore was written when Chinese Nationalist soldiers began seeking out and executing suspected 'traitors' without trial.

Luo Zhuoying wrote that 'every officer should search their vicinity for these traitors, selling their country and committing crimes, and execute them by firing squad.'

Japanese troops also convinced themselves that acts of violence were acceptable. Ōuchi Toshimichi was with one of the first units that went into Nanjing in 1937. Toshimichi wrote in his diary: 'The Chinese army has become really despicable to me; I want us to wipe them out as quickly as possible.'

Even a US Christian Army Chaplain, Charles Trent, marked in his diary the numbers of 'good', meaning 'dead', 'Japs'.

John Browning, an American artist and former Boy Scout, who witnessed the beheading of a Japanese captive by machete, wrote in his diary: 'War is war, and the Geneva Red Cross Convention... is a long, long way from the front-line. There is but one law here, KILL, KILL, KILL!'

Dr Moore said: 'Diaries, written by soldiers in wartime, can actually be quite dangerous: they are seen by their writers as repositories of unchangeable truths. These soldiers often come from ordinary backgrounds, but through their writing establish a rationale for extreme behaviour, getting angrier and angrier. You can't rewrite a document and you can't change history.

'It's also true that veterans in conflict – including Iraq – seem to have more difficulty in coming to terms with themselves if they have written a diary. If you are a soldier and decide to write a diary, you should think about your goal and the consequences of what you write.'

He added: 'Battlefield reports have always been a requirement in the field of war. But as the 20th-century culture of reportage emerged, they became more personal. Personal diaries were officially not allowed on the front-line, but it would have been hypocritical for officers to stop them, as they were writing something similar themselves.'

NEWS IN BRIEF

ATLANTIC ANNIVERSARY MARKED

British naval ships HMS *Illustrious*, HMS *Edinburgh*, and HMS *Blythe* took part in the recent colourful Ceremony of the Constable's Dues at the Tower of London. The ships were welcomed to the Tower as part of a month of events marking the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

The annual event can be traced back to the 14th century, and is related to the Crown's authority over the City of London. During the Middle Ages, successive kings believed it was their right to extract tolls from vessels on the Thames. On the king's behalf, the Constable of the Tower of London was empowered to demand these tolls as a perquisite of his office. Past offerings have included barrels of rum, oysters, mussels, and cockles; this year, the Tower's Constable, General the Lord Richard Dannatt, will be presented with a barrel of wine.

TYNEMOUTH REMEMBERS

A community heritage project based on the wartime experiences of a tightly knit riverside community is producing a ground-breaking back story to WWI.

Since early 2011, a group of more than 50 volunteers has been working to create a biography for each of the more than 1,700 casualties of the Great War from within the former Borough of Tynemouth, who were included on a Roll of Honour published in 1923. The information will be stored on a database, including photographs and images from original documents. The aim is to upload it to the web in spring 2014.

Tynemouth World War I Commemoration Project members agreed that an updated and expanded reproduction of the Roll of Honour and a programme of commemorative events would be a fitting tribute to that generation.

AUCTIONING THE PAST

As part of the war propaganda effort to rally support from America and the British Dominions, a series of military posters were created by top artists showing British war successes against the Germans. The posters were printed with headline copy in French to support the French resistance, as well as in Spanish to dissuade Spain from entering the war on the side of the Germans.

A large cache of these posters was recently found in excellent condition outside Boston, Massachusetts, and repatriated to England, where they are being offered for sale by Onslows Auction Gallery on 21 June. With approximately 20 different posters, mostly English, and some duplicates in French or Spanish, the collection offers everyone an opportunity to own an affordable piece of our history. Each is in good condition, and suitable for framing.

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WEATHER WAS VITAL

I read your article on El Alamein in the May issue (*MHM* 32) with interest. My father, Glyn Davies, was in the Royal Dragoons, who, in their armoured cars, were the first troops to break through the Axis lines, causing havoc in the enemy rear in the final days of the battle. Later they harassed the retreating forces. He would have disagreed totally with the way you dismissed the importance of the weather as a reason for failing to destroy Rommel's army.

Before he died 10 years ago, I discussed that subject with my father. He pointed out that the retreating Germans and Italians were able to use the coastal road. So too were most of the pursuing British troops, but not those attempting to cut Rommel off. They had to go across the open desert and, as long as the sand remained firm, they might have succeeded. When the rain turned the sand to mud, that put paid to their hopes.

I fail to see anything remotely 'risible' about this explanation.

Roy Davies
Pontyclun, Wales

HIPPER NOT SO GREAT

While I found the February issue of *MHM* interesting, I think the article on Admiral Hipper painted a very biased picture. Looked at another way, his plan for the defence of the German coast was shown to be a failure at Heligoland Bight. His insistence on bringing along the slower armoured cruiser *Blücher* at Dogger Bank meant that his force was outpaced by the British battlecruisers, resulting in the loss of the *Blücher*. At Jutland, rather than none of Hipper's ships being sunk, *Seydlitz* was almost lost, while *Lützow* was badly damaged and was scuttled by her crew. Towards the end of the war, he was ready to lead his men to almost certain death all in the name of 'honour'.

The Germans may have claimed a victory, and certainly did considerable damage to the Grand Fleet. But they had fled the scene by 1 June, leaving the British in control of the North Sea. And, as the Germans could not break the Allied blockade, the overall result of the battle should be considered a defeat.

Andrew Hobley
The Meads

CRIMEA CAME FIRST

In 'Lords of War' (*MHM* 31) Correlli Barnett writes, 'What qualities did Lincoln bring to the task in conducting the first modern war in history?'

The US Civil War was not the first modern war. A few years back I was lucky enough to make a trip to the Crimea, where I walked some of its battlefields, including the 'Valley of Death' at Balaclava. It was the Crimean War (1853-1856) that saw the widespread use of items normally attributed to the US Civil War. These included steam-ships, telegraphs, Minié balls, and railways.

The British laid a railway at Balaclava, constructed by troops brought in on steamships, leading from the dockside to the front at Sevastopol. The war also saw the first widespread use of the camera and the first war-photographers.

Alan B Moore
Suffolk

DEBATABLE STATEMENTS

In his review of Jonathan Dimbleby's *Destiny in the Desert* ('Reviews', *MHM* 28), Mark Corby states that the 'whole North African adventure [was] an expensive waste of time.'

Has Mark Corby heard of the Suez Canal and the Middle East oil-fields that the Axis powers almost gained control of? They were potentially more important to Hitler than the Russian front. Had he realised it and seized these prizes, Britain might well have been out of the war (perhaps the USA too).

'The tide was not turned in Africa… in reality it was turned in Russia by the failure of Operation Barbarossa,' Corby continues. The tide was not turned in Russia in 1941, but in October/November 1942 when Rommel was pushed back. Before 1941, Hitler was checked by the Battle of Britain in 1940.

Mention is made of Rommel's tiny force. My research has yielded the following figures: 496 tanks, approximately 500 guns, 850 anti-tank guns, 104,000 troops. Hardly tiny!

Montgomery had about twice that number at his disposal. He knew that the only way he would defeat Rommel was with a 2:1 advantage, and that his strength lay in his infantry and artillery. He used them first, followed by the armour. And he was right, was he not? He won! Monty's real strength, of course, was that he knew how to motivate his men, as with all great commanders.

I am proud of the very small part my father played in the Battle of El Alamein. It saddens me greatly to read articles such as this, which for some reason seem to abound these days.

Mike Oliver

FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

Dr Phil Stone outlines the Richard III Society's views regarding the king's burial.

When the 'Looking for Richard Project' was devised by Philippa Langley of the Richard III Society, her main purpose was not only to find the remains of Richard III but, if he could be found, to ensure that he was then laid to rest with honour and dignity in a tomb that befitted the remains of an anointed Medieval English king.

After his death at Bosworth, the body of Richard III was taken into Leicester to be publicly exhibited before it was taken to the Grey Friars, where it was hastily buried in the church in a grave too small for it. Appearances suggest that his hands were still bound, and that he was not given a coffin nor possibly even a shroud. Whilst we can be sure that he was given a burial service with a requiem mass – the monks would have seen to that – he most certainly did not receive the proper rites and ceremonies due to a king.

No-one present at the battle would have recognised the image of Richard III that is so often portrayed today. They would not have understood how the warrior who nearly won the battle and only died because of the treason of two of his time-serving nobles, one of whom was the stepfather of his opponent, could have been portrayed as a monster. To them, Richard III was a good king who had the welfare of his people at heart, seeking fair dealing for all, not just the rich and powerful.

We now have the opportunity to reverse the insults laid upon him by his successors. The remains of King Richard must be treated with all respect and dignity. For members of the Richard III Society and Ricardians all around the world, this means he must be reinterred in a proper tomb, one that stands above the ground. A ledger stone is not enough.

The tomb should be decorated with heraldic symbols that represent Richard Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester and King of England; the white rose of the House of York; and the white boar, which was Richard's own cognisance. Perhaps the cross of St Cuthbert – one of the saints with which Richard and his queen, Anne Neville, were most closely associated – should also adorn the tomb, as the society's proposed design suggests.

Richard III must now be brought out of the darkness and obscurity of an unmarked grave, and into the light of a tomb that befits him both as a man and as a Medieval king.

The decision as to which religious house should be given the honour of providing a place for the king's remains is not the society's to make. But it is happy to work with the authorities of Leicester Cathedral to see that King Richard is 'right royally' interred with all ceremony and with a suitable monument. It is interesting that many citizens of Leicester agree that 'the king in the car park' should now be given a table tomb as befits his status as an English monarch.

The finding of the lost remains of a 15th-century king is a unique occurrence that provides a unique opportunity for their reinterment in a manner that reflects their historical importance. The public today and generations to come can expect nothing less. For Ricardians and believers in fair play around the world, the finding of the king's remains means we can clear away half a millennium of myth and innuendo, and give a dignified reinterment to the physical remains of the man who was known in his lifetime as 'Good King Richard'. Please, let us not repeat the mistakes and insults of the past.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Phil Stone is chairman of the Richard III Society, a frequent lecturer on the subject to both Ricardian and non-Ricardian audiences, and a contributor the society's magazine.

Images: © Looking for Richard Project 2013

The Western Front Association

founded 1980

The Third Battle of Ypres - Passchendaele - is often portayed as just another grinding battle of mud and trenches. It began with great success, but both sides were eventually defeated by the weather. Nonetheless, the formidable German Army was worn down and pushed backwards with tenacious resolve in atrocious conditions.

The Great War is a fascinating subject, with a complex blend of military, social, science, political and economic history. To understand much more about the 1914-18 period, and to appreciate the context in which the Third Battle of Ypres was fought, **join us at The Western Front Association**.

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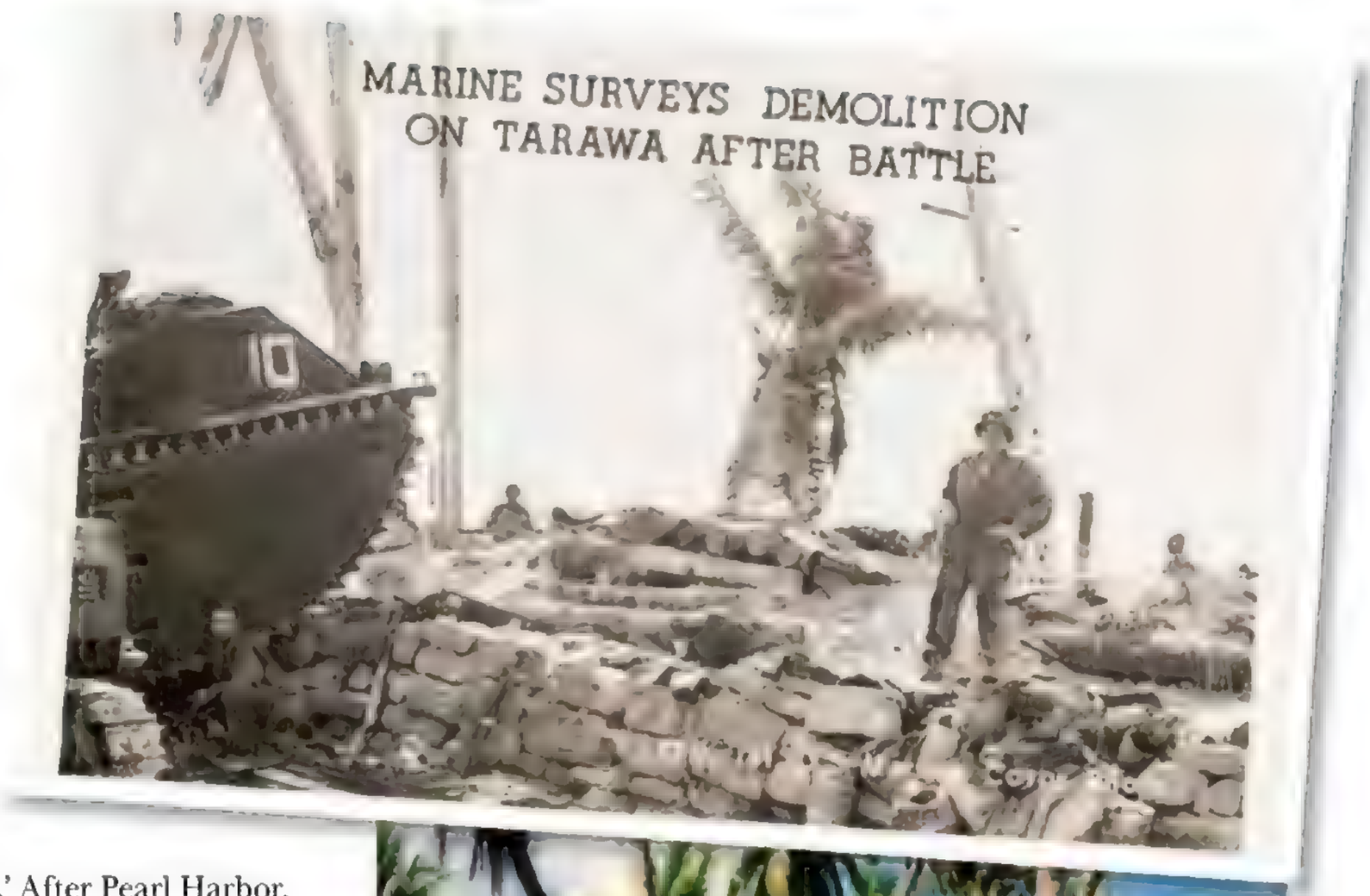
TIP OF THE SPEAR

The human touch: stories of war and conflict from readers of *MHM*.

Durk Steed is a writer, lecturer, and lifelong student of the Battle of Tarawa.

Durk Steed highlights the role of first-wave amtrac driver Don Crain during the 1943 Tarawa invasion.



Top This rare photograph shows one of the lucky first-wave LVTs that made it to the Red Beach 2 stone seawall.
Above Today, the beach at 'The Pocket' is a lush paradise. Except for one large concrete bunker further inland, 'The Pocket' camouflages its violent past well.

Don Crain turned 17 in October 1941, and went straight to the local Marine Corps recruiter to celebrate. 'My three brothers, all taller and stronger than me, couldn't pass the Marine physical for one reason or another. I passed, but the Marines had a pre-war quota system accepting only 10 or so guys a month from Montana. I got turned down in October, November, and December.' After Pearl Harbor, the quota was dropped, and Don's birthday wish granted. In January 1942 he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps.

Six weeks of San Diego boot camp followed, and Don joined C Battery, Special Weapons Battalion, Second Marine Division. He shipped out in October 1942 aboard the *Monroe*. Of his arrival in New Zealand, Don remarked, 'We took one look, saw all the girls, and loved the place.'

Unknown to Don, in July 1943 the Joint Chiefs ordered the Second Marine Division to seize Tarawa atoll. Two formidable challenges surrounded Tarawa that would have a major impact on Don's near future: concentrated, fortified Japanese beach defences, and a wide, shallow fringing-reef that could not guarantee enough depth for traditional landing craft.

Lieutenant-Colonel David Shoup had a bold idea: employ the Marines' first-generation amphibious tractor – primitive, thin-skinned, underpowered, and primarily used to haul supplies behind the lines – as the spearhead of the assault. Shoup's daring idea would transform Don Crain's life – and the Pacific war – forever.

While Don and the Marines drank deeply of Kiwi hospitality, planners assigned men to crew the amphibious craft in its daring new role. In August 1943 Don was transferred into C Company, 2nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion. He had never seen an LVT-1, but sparks flew on his first encounter with the 23-foot-long, $35,000 craft. 'I found the vehicle fascinating', he remarked. Don embarked on a crash-course, training as an LVT-1 driver.

The assault

In late October, Don's LVT-1, with nine other first-wave amtracs, was hoisted onto the assault transport *Virgo*'s weatherdeck. Don's tractor was upgraded with three machine-guns, ¼-inch steel to protect the cab, and a white '41' painted on the stern and cab's sides. Next came two days of invasion rehearsal in Efate, New Hebrides. On 14 November, the assault Marines learned the name of their target. 'None of us had heard of Tarawa. D-minus-two the lieutenants and captains gave us a pre-invasion talk. They said that after all the bombing and shelling there wouldn't be a Jap[anese] left alive. If there were, they'd all be crying for their moms. They told us it would be a piece of cake.'

Shrouded in the early morning darkness of 20 November, *Virgo* arrived off Tarawa. 'I still remember praying, trying to sleep, and having a meal of steak and eggs.' LVT 41 was hoisted over the side. Don guided her to the open-water rendezvous point. There, 20 assault Marines of the 2nd Regiment cross-decked from Higgins boats into Don's amtrac, packing in tight as sardines. The LVT's low freeboard and the plunging sway of the ocean swell combined to soak the leathernecks.

At 6.48am, Don guided LVT 41 into the long, single-file line of 42 first-wave LVT-1s. Two lines of 24 and 21 LVT-2s

First wave heads toward Tarawa
Grounded hulk that fired on Don's LVT
Red Beach 2
The pier aflame – Japanese on the pier fired at Don's LVT
Approximate route of Don's LVT
Don identified his position in the attack among this platoon of LVTs.
1st wave
2nd wave
3rd wave

Right An annotated aerial photo showing the three waves of amtracs headed shorewards. Don marked the position of his LVT among the platoon of first-wave amtracs in the centre.

composing the second and third waves scudded along port side.

Shepherded by the minesweeper *Pursuit*'s searchlight, Don fought a headwind and current to navigate through the lagoon passage. Hunkered for hours at the controls of LVT 41 (from *Virgo* to the Line of Departure was almost nine miles), Don had no idea of the fierce maelstrom of concentrated fire he was approaching.

Beginning before dawn, Navy battleships unleashed an apocalypse. For almost three hours, 16-inch shells – sounding like freight trains flying through the air – rained down on the little island exploding in eruptions of sand and flame. Sunrise lifted the curtain on a theatre of destruction. Carrier aircraft strafed and bombed when the battleships took a rest. Don caught first sight of the island through the narrow slit of the cab's armour. The Navy's promise to blast Tarawa into the sea seemed to be coming true, bolstering his spirits. Burning and smoking, Tarawa looked like a funeral pyre.

It seemed impossible that any Japanese remained alive. Yet Don's trusty Springfield 1903 rifle was close by. Lieutenant Bonnie Little stood behind, manning one of the cab's .50 calibre machine-guns. In a letter to his wife, Little wrote, 'The Marines have a way of making you afraid – not of dying – but of not doing your job.'

Lying in wait

Don stared as the tropic breeze blew the pall of smoke away. The island floated above the lagoon, defiant and menacing. Ashore, out of Don's sight, Japanese Marines hid in their bunkers and pill-boxes, staring down gunsights, waiting for the Americans to come into range.

At 8.24am and 6,000 yards from shore, Don's column of first-wave LVT-1s, white frothing wake spewing behind, executed a right turn and crossed the Line of Departure. A human shot-put of US Marines was being thrown at Tarawa, and Don Crain was front and centre. What remained to be determined was how far the throw would go, and if and when the Japanese could stop it.

Don heard the command 'Lock and load!'. In the cargo hold behind, riflemen slammed eight-round clips into Garands and pushed safeties forward. Lieutenant Little advanced the first round into the .50 Browning's chamber.

Squeezing every bit of power out of the 150hp Hercules engine, Don coaxed 3.5 knots out of LVT 41. He steered to the west of Tarawa's long pier, aiming for Red Beach 2. The current pulled him further right.

For several minutes, the first-wave LVTs advanced shoreward under an uneasy calm. Both sides held their breath – and their triggers. The Japanese waited for the LVTs to come into range. American ships and planes stopped firing to avoid friendly-fire accidents. The low-riding Marines had no visible targets.

As Don closed to within 3,000 yards of shore, Japanese air-bursts peppered the amtrac. Contact with the reef, the reason for the LVTs' presence, was almost at hand.

In stunned amazement, the Japanese watched as the gangly amphibians did not stall at the reef but waddled out of the lagoon. The first wave of LVTs clawed onto the shallow reef's sand and coral, and churned forward. The Japanese had never seen such vehicles. 'Little ships with wheels,' one Japanese survivor summarised. 'Like dozens of spiders scattering over the surface,' said another.

Sitting duck

The Japanese regained their senses, and the shortcomings of the navy's pre-invasion bombardment became obvious: plenty of Japanese were alive with plenty of intact weapons. Without air or naval fire to keep the Japanese buttoned up, Don felt like a duck in a shooting gallery. His amtrac clawed across the shelterless reef, its speed increasing slightly as its tracks gained purchase on the water-covered coral and sand.

The reef was about 800 yards out. The pier was to our left. I could see bullets coming through our bow and a lot coming through the side. We were taking a lot of fire from the hulk of a ship aground to our right. The fire killed both the radio operator and the assistant driver.

Pushing and pulling on the steering levers, Don piloted LVT 41 towards the cove separating Red Beaches 1 and 2. Directly ahead lay a pernicious point of resistance dubbed 'The Pocket'. The Pocket was to withstand three days of Marine attacks, and was the last position of organised Japanese resistance on Tarawa to succumb. Unknowingly, Don was driving LVT 41 into the eye of the Tarawa hurricane.

After Tarawa, maintenance officers told us that they had tested the armor plating installed on the amtrac cabs in ▷

New Zealand. An M1 Garand's bullet could go right through it. We were never told that before the invasion. It would have been too demoralising.

Marines in the cargo hold of the LVT did not even have the scant protection of the cab's armoured plates. Lieutenant Little, who had written to his wife that he was afraid of not doing his job, died proving his commitment to his words. 'He was firing one of the machine-guns, but I was busy driving and couldn't see what was going on behind me,' remembered Don.

With a dead crew-member on each side, Don gripped the steering levers as LVT 41 churned across the reef and towards the Pocket. Every yard of the way, punishing hits from machine-guns and near misses from 75mm dual-purpose guns pummelled the tractor.

'We got about halfway across the reef; then, the amtrac's engine just stopped. It was dead.' Focused on his job of driving the LVT to the beach, Don was unaware when the other Marines in the cargo hold had been killed. He did not know whether they had died one by one or all at once. He only knew that when he crawled out between the cab's two dead Marines, the macabre sight of 18 more dead Marines met him in the cargo hold. Everything in the cargo hold, both humans and equipment, had been destroyed.

I was one of three to get out alive: the maintenance sergeant, one Marine rifleman – both wounded – and myself. We had no weapons. We jumped over the side and into the water and went to the tractor's stern.

Unwilling to abandon the two wounded Marines, Don kept them alive until dark and then got the pair to the seawall.

Ashore, Don joined the other Marines in wresting the island from the Japanese. The brutal three-and-a-half-day brawl cost both sides immensely, practically annihilating the Japanese. 'I can recall about 6 or 7% of Tarawa,' Don said. 'I block out the rest. What I still remember is the incredible noise and awful stench from dead bodies. The island stunk and reeked. You just can't forget that sort of thing. I also remember a Marine shot in the throat and unable to breathe. A corpsman cut an opening in his trachea and inserted a thermometer case to get him air and save his life.'

Bonnyman's trousers

Don came ashore with only the clothes on his back. After the battle, his uniform in tatters, Don joined other Marines searching for fresh clothes and souvenirs. While some Marines found unissued white Japanese sailor shirts, Don found the pack of a dead Marine, Lieutenant A Bonnyman. 'Inside was a clean pair of dungarees.'

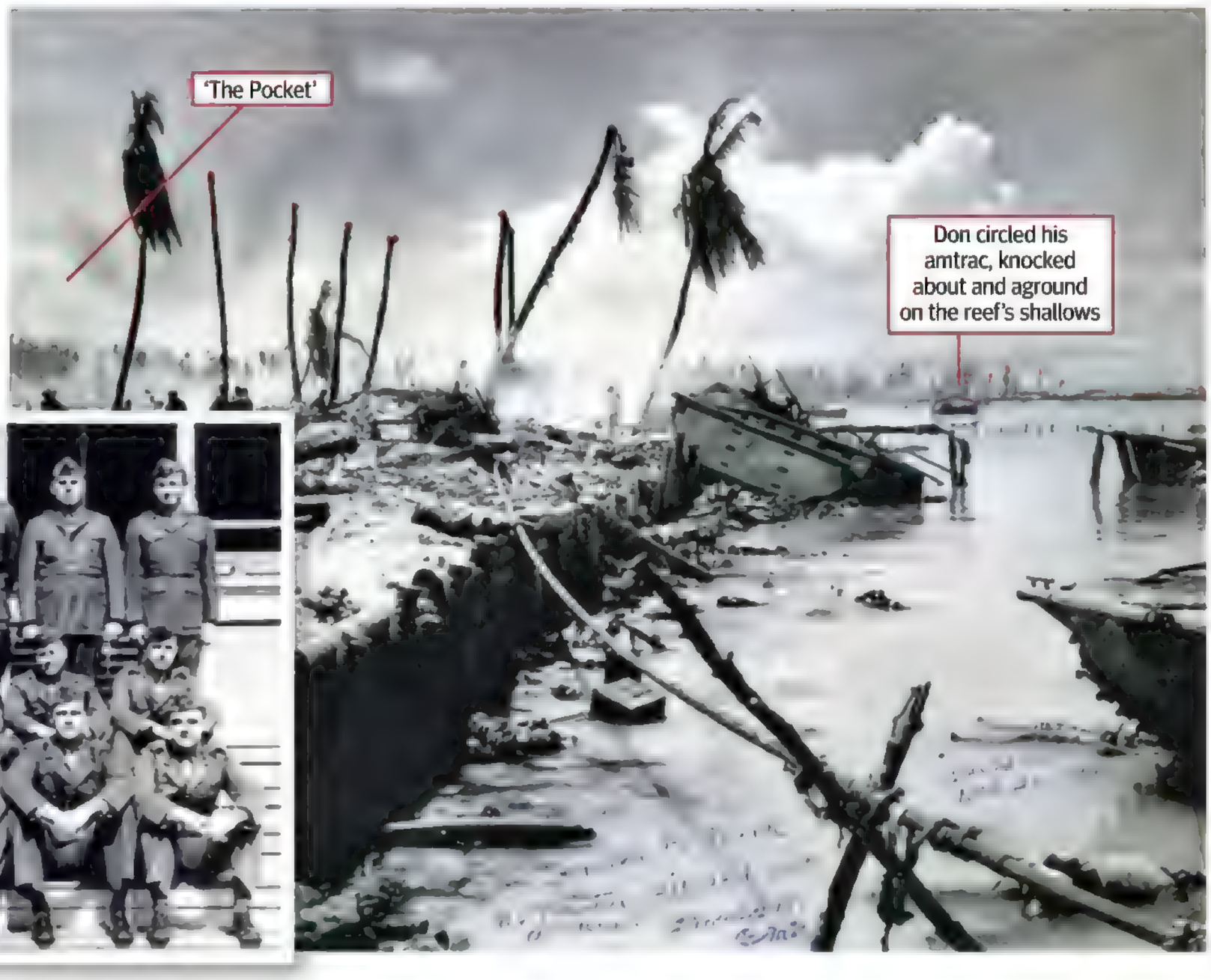
Don put on the clothes, unaware of who Bonnyman was. At the flag-raising ceremony, General Julian Smith ordered Marines to take off the Japanese clothing. An officer ordered Don to take off Bonnyman's lieutenant jacket since Don was a PFC. Afterwards, Don put it back on. Clad in Bonnyman's clothes, he remained on the island for a total of 19 days helping to salvage LVTs and unload garrison supplies.

Don eventually learned that the dungarees belonged to Alexander 'Sandy' Bonnyman, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 1947 for his heroic role in the capture of Red Beach 3's huge, sand-covered bombproof shelter. Long after the war, Don spoke to Bonnyman's daughter at a ceremony in Hawaii. 'I told her about the clothes. She said she was thrilled that he was helping Marines even after he died.'

Don went on to survive the Pearl Harbor explosion of LSTs loading for Saipan, earned a Bronze Star with Combat V at Saipan for action in his LVT-2, and made 14 D-Day shuttle runs on Tinian. On one such run, a Japanese sniper put a bullet hole in Don's LVT-2 – just above his head.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Durk Steed holds two postgraduate degrees, and is currently writing a young adult novel based on the United States Marine Corps combat photographers on Tarawa.



Right In this after-battle photograph of Red Beach 2, Don circled the final position of his amtrac in blue.

Below Officers of the 2nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion in New Zealand before the assault on Tarawa. Lieutenant Bonnie Little is on the top row, second from the left.

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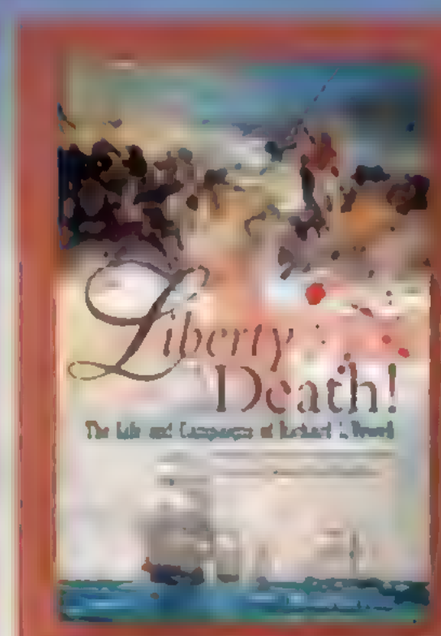

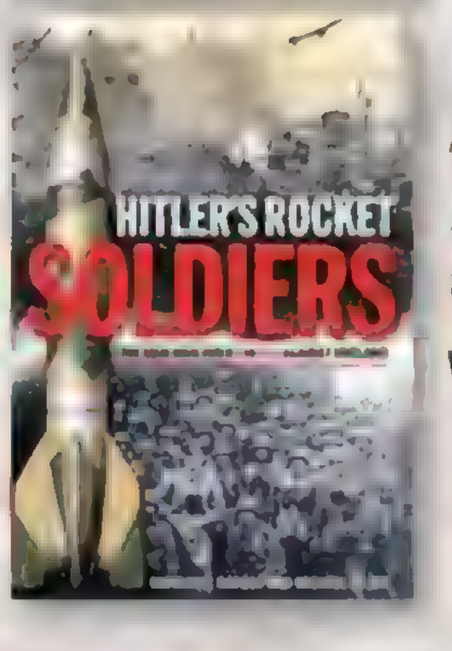

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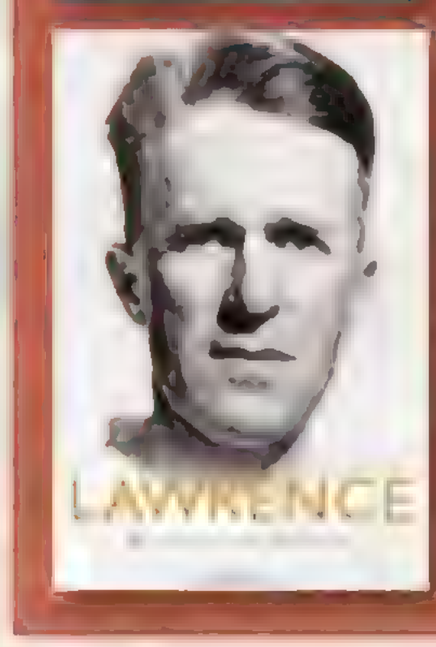

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THE KILLING

How did Richard III die?

The discovery of his skeleton has revealed the full horror of the close-quarters mêlée in which the last Yorkist king was cut down. *Military History Monthly* analyses the grim reality of 15th-century battle.

The skeleton excavated from beneath a Leicester car park in September 2012 was indeed that of King Richard III. Such was the announcement made to a global media audience at a tense press-conference on Monday 4 February this year. On the basis of careful osteological and DNA analysis, lead archaeologist Richard Buckley of the University of Leicester Archaeological Services was able to claim that the academic conclusion was now 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

The skeleton bore the traces of no less than ten unhealed wounds – evidence of 'perimortem' injuries suffered around the time of death. These provide gruesome evidence for reconstructing the final moments of England's last Plantagenet king.

So far, the body of Richard III is the only Bosworth battle fatality whose remains have been recovered. In 1996, however, building contractors uncovered a mass grave at Towton in north Yorkshire, close to the site of the Wars-of-the-Roses battle fought on Palm Sunday in 1461. The struggle had raged all day in the bitter cold of a snow blizzard, and by sunset, so the chroniclers say, thousands of dead were spread across several miles of countryside.

Towton death-pit

It was probably the bloodiest day in British history. More than 20,000 men, perhaps 30,000, were killed, the majority of them Lancastrians caught up in the rout at the end of the battle. The defeated found their escape-routes blocked, either by the Cock Beck stream, where many drowned or were trampled to death, or by the crush of heavily armed men attempting to flee their vengeful pursuers.

The dense tangle of bodies revealed by the archaeologists brought in to investigate the Towton 'death-pit' tell something of the story. The shallow, rectangular pit contained a minimum of 38 individuals. The bodies had been looted, stripped, and then tossed in without ceremony. All who could be identified were men, and the average age was around 30. The most striking thing about them was the exceptionally large number of unhealed battle injuries they had sustained. Many skulls had received multiple injuries. Two individuals had no less than ten head wounds each.

The injuries had been inflicted by a mix of blunt weapons (war-hammers and maces), sharp weapons (swords and daggers), and pointed weapons (bill-spikes or arrows). Injuries to all parts of the body were represented in the skeletal assemblage, but especially to hands and arms, as victims had attempted to shield themselves from blows, and above all to heads.

The death of Skeleton 25

A total of 113 wounds were counted on 27 crania examined by the osteologists. Skeleton 25 had become embroiled in a hand-to-hand fight with a sword-wielding opponent. He had received three wounds that skipped over the left side of his head, then a nick to his left jaw, and finally a deeper penetrating wound, again to the left side of his head. None of these blows was fatal, but he seems to have staggered, his defences down, and

Images: © WIPL, unless otherwise stated

DIGGING UP A KING

'I'll eat my hat if we find Richard III,' said lead archaeologist Richard Buckley as his team embarked on the Grey Friars project last year. A keen researcher with a direct line to the local council had secured support for an attempt to find the mortal remains of England's last Medieval king, but Leicester University's archaeologists rated the chances of doing so close to zero.

Archaeologists are usually very reluctant to link the material remains they excavate to named historical characters. The reason is simple: historical sources and material remains represent two radically different classes of information, yielding different kinds of insight into the past. Only very rarely is there close correspondence between a specific event recorded in the sources – like the death and burial of a king – and physical evidence excavated on-site.

At first, Buckley even doubted that any sort of permission to dig in the area would be granted by the city council. When it was, he welcomed the chance to excavate parts of the hitherto unexplored Grey Friars complex, but continued to believe his team 'did not stand a chance of finding Richard III'.

taken a massive blow across the back of his head, which smashed through the skull and penetrated the brain.

But his assailant had not finished. As Skeleton 25 collapsed face-down, he received two more heavy blows, one forceful enough to turn him over, the second bisecting his face diagonally from his left eye to his upper jaw, splitting open the palate.

The evidence of the Towton death-pit confirmed that of the mass graves excavated near the town of Visby on the island of Gotland in Sweden. Some 2,000 skeletons of men killed at the Battle of Visby in 1361 had been recovered. A very high proportion had multiple injuries, especially to the cranium, often inflicted from behind.

Two clear conclusions seem to emerge from the evidence of the Towton and Visby bodies: hand-to-hand combat meant frenzied killing in a context shaped by fear and ferocity; and much of that killing was done in the rout, as the enemy attempted to flee, and the sudden release of tension turned victors into butchers.

Let us try to place these realities into a wider tactical context as we attempt to reconstruct the final moments of Richard III.

The arrow-storm

The longbow had an impact on tactics in the mid-15th-century comparable with that of the machine-gun in the early 20th: it reduced battles to heavily defensive, slow-moving, attritional struggles. For every man-at-arms in a Wars-of-the-Roses army there were at least three and sometimes as many as ten archers. The battlefield was deluged under an arrow-storm.▷

Photo: © University of Leicester

Right The body of King Richard III, as laid out during osteological analysis.

Very little was known of the layout of the site, and a 'desktop' investigation of the historical sources still left wide uncertainties about the location of buildings, the location of the church, and then the location of any royal burial – giving the archaeologists a series of 'successively diminishing probabilities' of finding the remains of the king.

The discovery of the body in September 2012 was a sensation, since strong circumstantial evidence – the location, the crude grave-pit, the dumped position of the body, the curvature of the spine – all pointed towards it being that of Richard III. But it took comparative DNA analysis using samples from both the skeleton and known surviving descendants before there could be certainty.

Some months of tension lay between excavation and definitive declaration. The 'gracile' character of the bones caused particular anxiety. 'One of the worst days of my life,' remembers Buckley, 'was when the osteologist phoned me up to say "I think it's a woman".'

9 KINGS WHO LOST THEIR THRONES

HAROLD II (1066)

The last of the Anglo-Saxon kings reigned for less than a year, and spent that year fighting to retain power against a coordinated double invasion by Vikings in the north and Normans in the south. Victorious at Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire, Harold was defeated and killed at the Battle of Hastings.

WILLIAM II (1087-1100)

Red-faced and hot-tempered, William 'Rufus' filled his court with undeserving favourites and spent too much time out hunting. This was to be his downfall: he was killed by a stray arrow in the New Forest. Some suspected foul play.

JOHN (1199-1216)

At loggerheads with the barons for much of his reign, John was a fugitive king at the time of his death. His attempt to renege on commitments made at the signing of Magna Carta in 1215 led to civil war and the occupation of London by a foreign usurper invited in by John's rebellious subjects.

EDWARD II (1307-1327)

A weak-willed playboy dominated by favourites, Edward was an ineffective and unpopular king. The English army crashed to defeat at Bannockburn in 1314. Estranged from his wife (the king preferred male lovers), he was overthrown in a conspiracy led by the queen herself. Edward was then murdered while imprisoned in Berkeley Castle by having a red-hot poker thrust in his backside.

RICHARD II (1377-1399)

Like Edward II, Richard was bored by government responsibility and addicted to pleasure and

This had two consequences. First, though it was now common for all soldiers, archers included, to be mounted, this was for strategic mobility, not tactical effect: mounted action on the battlefield had become exceptional because of the vulnerability of the horses to arrow-shot. Second, the comprehensiveness of protective armour reached an historic peak: men entered the killing-zone of the battlefield wearing all-encompassing layers of plate, mail, leather, and padding.

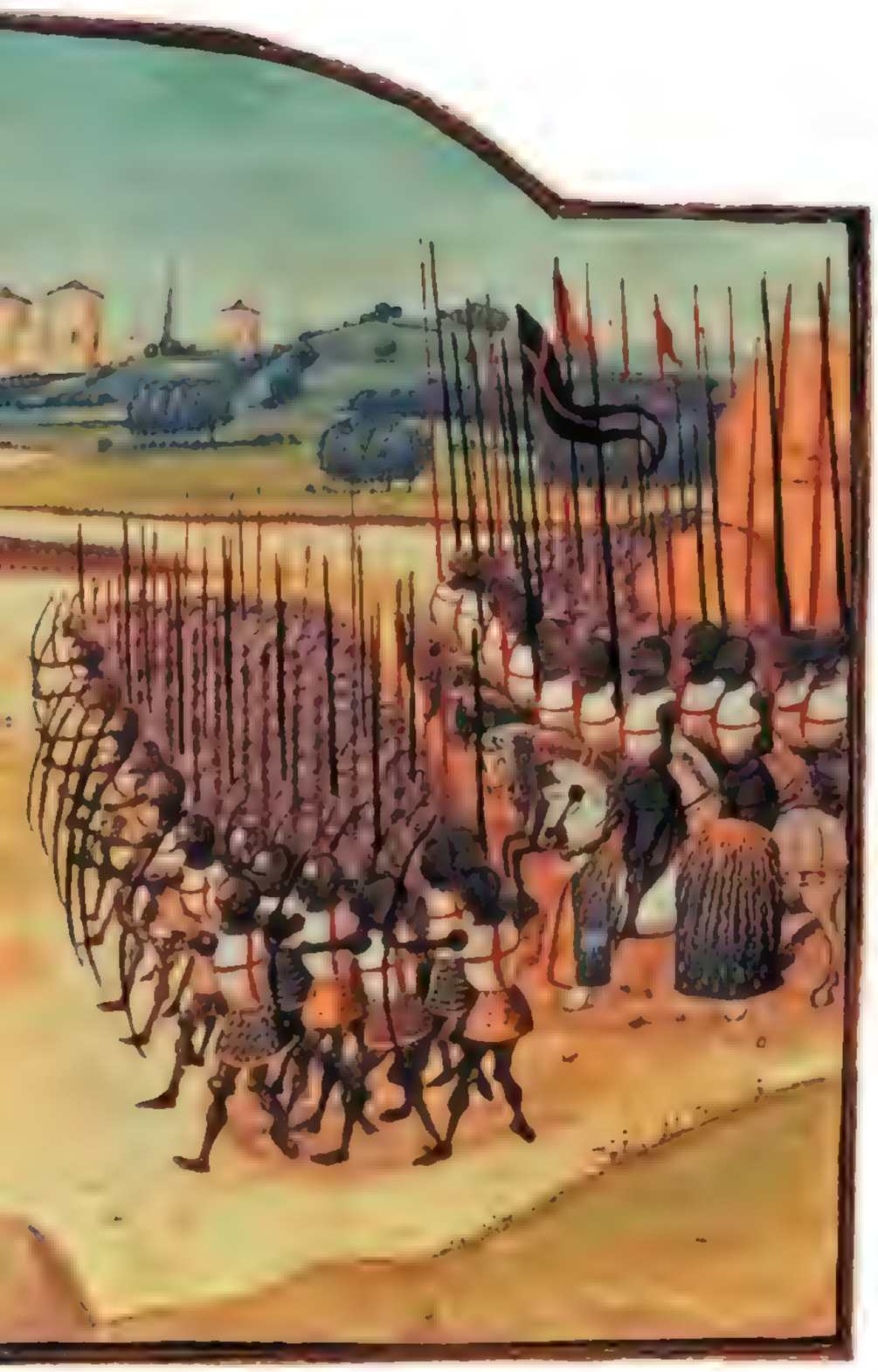
Movement, in consequence, became sluggish and awkward. The enclosed helmet was a particular problem: it reduced visibility, increased response times, and hampered command-and-control. When men closed their visors and advanced to contact, they entered a semi-private world, as aware of their own breathing as of events around them. Medieval sources make frequent reference to the significance of the lifting of the visor in the thick of battle – to be recognised, to issue an order, to take stock… and sometimes to receive that fatal arrow-shot in the face. What made the risk sometimes necessary was the constraint of the shut-down helmet.

Armour induced sluggishness, and this in turn made the integrity of the line more vital: men-at-arms had to deploy with room to wield their own weapons, but close enough to deny entry to the enemy. Fear did the rest. Men in close contact with the enemy, facing a packed array of armoured opponents wielding long-handled bills and a variety of axes, hammers, maces, and swords, were rarely gung-ho: they fought nervously, tentatively, with minimal risk. Most of the killing was done in the rout, not in the battle itself, which, for much of the time, had the form of a protracted stand-off at close quarters. Bosworth is a case in point: the Yorkists are reported to have lost a thousand killed, the victorious Lancastrians only two or three hundred.

The Battle of Bosworth

This is the general understanding we need to make sense of the paltry records of the Battle of Bosworth.

Above Full plate-armour of the mid 15th century. It provided protection against both the arrow-storm and close-quarters weaponry, but it slowed movement and response times, and it hampered coordination and the issuing of orders.



Above Though this image purports to depict the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, it was painted somewhat later and is more representative of warfare at the time of the Wars of the Roses. In particular, it depicts massed ranks of heavily armoured longbowmen opposing one another – a central feature of mid-15th-century English battlefields.

King Richard's army, around 10,000 strong, was organised in the traditional three 'battles': the vanguard under the Duke of Norfolk, the centre under the King, the rear-guard under the Earl of Northumberland. Henry Tudor's smaller army, perhaps two-thirds the size of the King's, comprised two battles: the vanguard under the Earl of Oxford, the rear-guard under Henry himself.

The battle opened with exchanges of gunfire and arrow-shot, and then the two vanguards advanced simultaneously and clashed in the centre of the field. The mêlée which followed may have lasted an hour or more. It may or may not have involved the complex manoeuvres described in later historical accounts (see the following article 'Bosworth: an "imagined" battle?'). It almost certainly involved reinforcement by elements at least of the other battles on either side.

The great uncertainty hanging over proceedings was the stance of the Stanleys. Sir William Stanley and his brother Thomas Lord Stanley each commanded massive blocs of men, deployed north and south of the battlefield respectively. Their combined force was probably greater in number than Henry Tudor's entire army. The commitment of these men – *if* they were committed – would decide the battle. But for long they remained motionless.

Richard's charge

Then King Richard led a mounted charge at the head of the 200-strong personal retinue gathered around his white-boar standard. They stormed towards the opposing retinue of Henry Tudor, apparently easily visible from the high ground on which the King's army was posted, and presumably identifiable from the dragon, greyhound, and red-rose motifs on the standards.

They almost reached their target. Henry's standard-bearer, Sir William Brandon, was cut down and died on the battlefield. But Richard's men were quickly overhauled, blocked in front by Henry's retinue, and then, it seems, surrounded as Sir William Stanley's men counterattacked from the north in overwhelming strength. Arrow-shot had probably claimed many in the charge, and the survivors were then knocked back, dispersed, and swept beyond reach of the man they were pledged to defend with their lives by the weight of force suddenly thrown against them.

Why had Richard ordered the charge? We do not know. Perhaps the Stanleys had already moved and it was a desperate last-minute gamble. Perhaps they had not yet moved and the King hoped to pre-empt their intervention by slaying his rival. Perhaps he had sensed some opportunity, some wavering, some disarray in the opposing battle-line. Whatever the reason, it carried him to a place on the battlefield from which there would be no escape.

The King alone

The King was now unhorsed, isolated, surrounded by enemies, and without the protection of a helmet. His desperate gamble had failed. He had reached the heart of Henry Tudor's battle-line only to find himself on his own against the personal retinue of his rival. ▷

9 KINGS WHO LOST THEIR THRONES

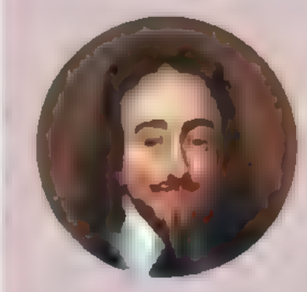
extravagance. Overthrown in a military revolt led by Henry Bolingbroke (who became Henry IV), he was deposed and then secretly murdered in Pontefract Castle.

HENRY VI (1422-1461)

A religious obsessive dominated by his queen, Margaret of Anjou, Henry was unable to prevent England's descent into the protracted internecine conflict now known as 'the Wars of the Roses'. Overthrown in 1461, he remained in play until 1471, when, having been briefly restored to the throne in a Lancastrian coup, his army was defeated and he was captured and promptly murdered.

RICHARD III (1483-1485)

Having murdered his brother's two sons, Richard of York seized the throne for himself. This was more *realpolitik* than personal ambition, since a boy-king threatened Yorkist control of the throne and most of the dominant faction backed Richard. But the taint of usurpation and murder contributed to his downfall.



CHARLES I (1625-1649)

Driven from London by revolution in 1642, and defeated in two successive civil wars (1642-1646 and 1648), Charles was put on trial by the radical leaders of the New Model Army and their supporters in a purged 'Rump' Parliament. He was beheaded in a public execution in Whitehall after condemnation as a traitor to the English people.

JAMES II (1685-1688)

Son of Charles I and brother of Charles II, James attempted to reverse the outcome of the English Revolution by establishing an absolute monarchy and restoring the Catholic religion. He was overthrown in a military coup ('the Glorious Revolution'): senior army officers secretly invited William of Orange to invade and seize the throne, and then mutinied in his favour as he advanced on London.

Above A dramatic reconstruction of the climax of the Battle of Bosworth: the charge of the Yorkist royal retinue. It appears to have carried to the centre of the Lancastrian line – Henry Tudor's standard-bearer was killed – but then to have been overwhelmed by superior numbers, leaving the King unhorsed, isolated, without helmet, and surrounded by his enemies.

Nor was he a strong man. Though still in his prime (he was 33) and an experienced soldier in an age when kings fought in the line, he was lightly built and disabled. A foreign visitor's observation that 'he had delicate arms and legs' has been confirmed by analysis of the skeleton. Curvature of the spine had reduced his height – he would have been 5ft 8in, while his brother, Edward IV, had been 6ft 4in and England's tallest monarch. It had also put strain on his heart and lungs, perhaps leaving him in permanent pain.

He was, as Shakespeare had him say, 'not shaped for sportive tricks'. Yet now, on the field of Bosworth, on the morning of 22 August 1485, he faced a visceral hand-to-hand struggle against the odds for both his life and his crown.

The Lancastrian military élite confronting him would have been encased in plate-armour weighing around 60lbs. We do not know whether they were still mounted, though it seems likely they were. There was no particular reason why the retinue should have dismounted. Shakespeare may have had some contemporary source for his report of Richard's desperation to secure a horse. And some of the injuries to the dead king's skull could well have been inflicted by blows from above.

> The second blow cleaved away a whole chunk of cranium and exposed the brain, the severed portion of bone forming a bloody flap hinged with skin.

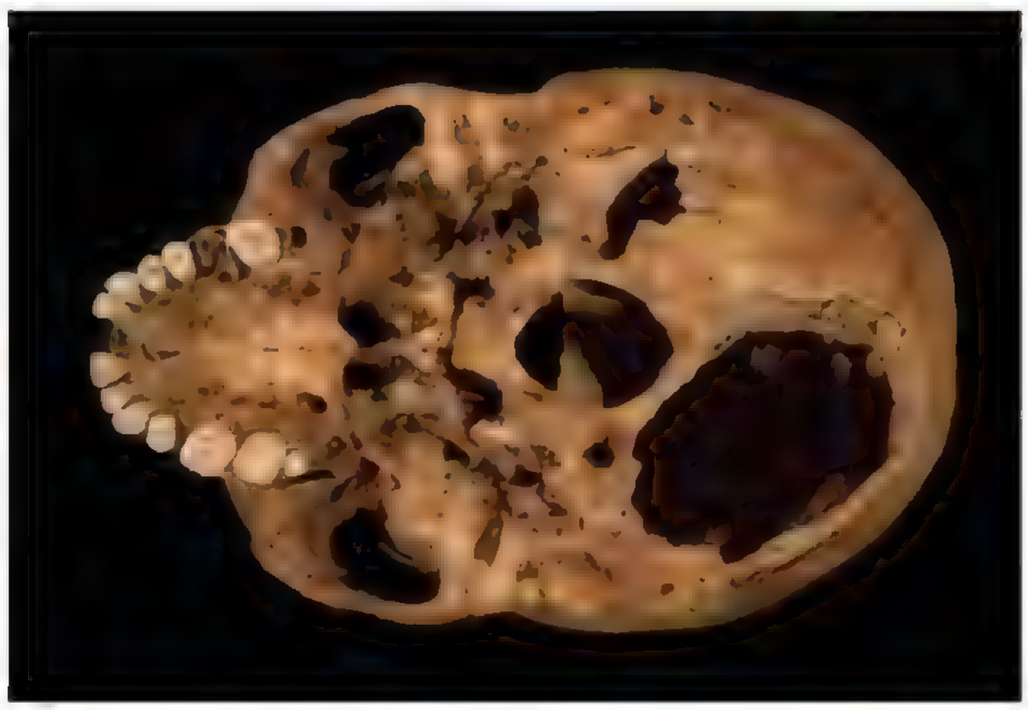
His enemies would have carried lances, pole-axes, war-hammers, and swords. Both pole-axes (long-shafted) and war-hammers (short-handled) were composite weapons, with steel heads formed of spike, mace, and blade or claw. They were designed to bore through or batter in plate-armour. The risk to a man who had lost his helmet and was surrounded was extreme.

The King slain

Even so, the cornered King remained dangerous as long as he was on his feet. The fighting may have continued warily for a while, with men keeping their distance, their guard up, lunging forwards only occasionally when sensing an opening. Kills were usually slow in coming and rarely clean in close-quarters struggle on a Medieval battlefield. So it may have been now, as Henry Tudor's leading henchmen crowded around the Yorkist king.

Three blades – bill-heads or swords – took slices off the unprotected scalp of the King. Hair, skin, and slivers of bone came away and blood went gushing down his face and neck. Then a fourth blow punctured the top of his skull. But still it was not a fatal wound, and the King may even have remained on his feet, though in great pain, bleeding profusely, perhaps staggering and swaying.

As already mentioned, the location of the injuries – all to the top of the head – may imply mounted enemies, perhaps offering grim osteological corroboration for the desperate cry of 'A horse, a horse, my kingdom for



Photos: © University of Leicester

Top left The skull of King Richard III, bearing the marks of no less than eight perimortem injuries, providing gruesome evidence of the victim's desperate death-struggle on the battlefield of Bosworth.

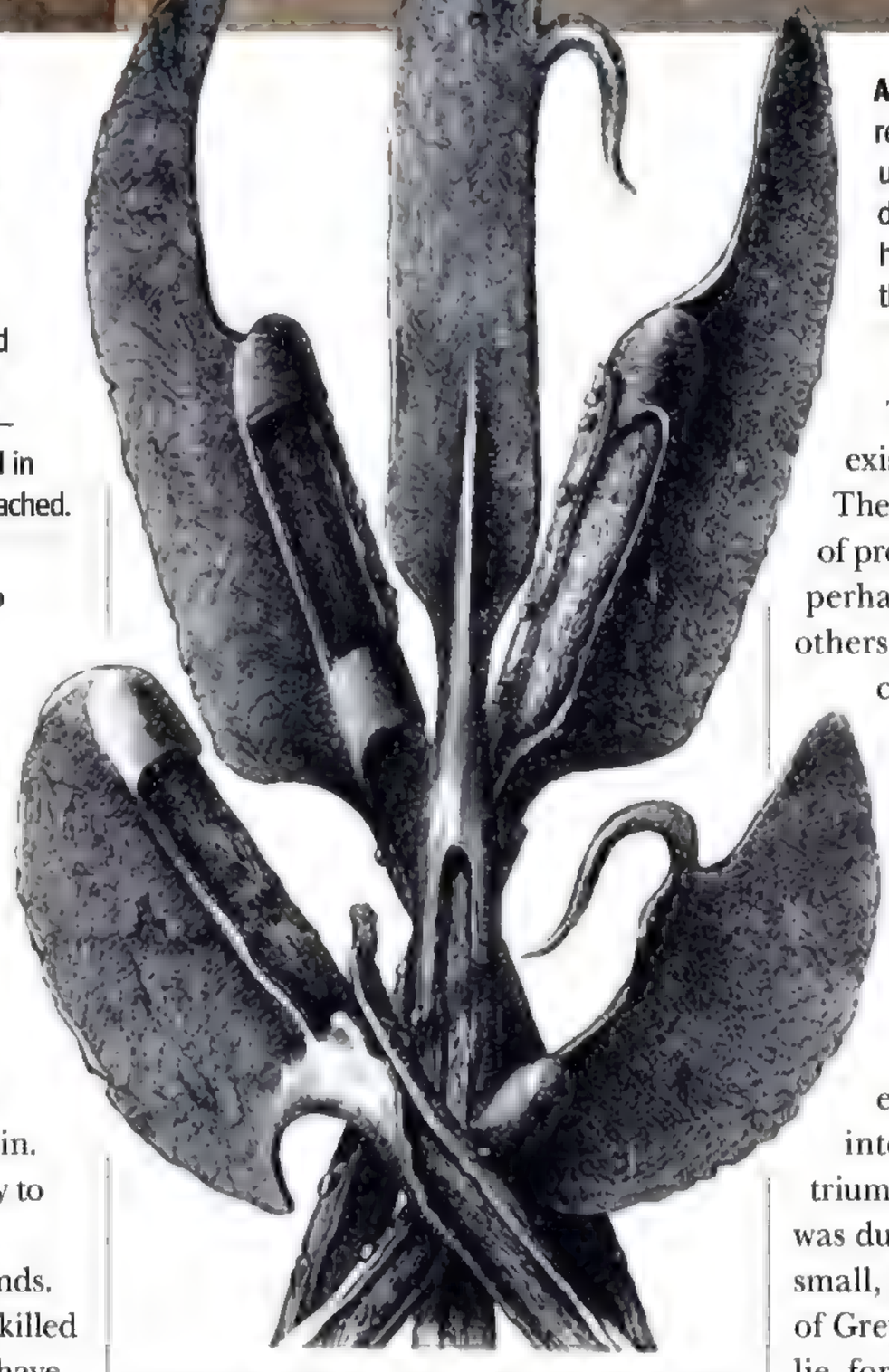
Top right The wound on the back of the head that shows that Richard III was pole-axed. A large slice of skull and brain was cut away – though the flap of severed bone was found in the grave, indicating that it had remained attached.

Above The Yorkist king's body as revealed in excavation, showing the unceremonious way in which it had been dumped in an undersized pit with the head propped up at one end, and also the distinctive curvature of the spine.

a horse' that the Bard attributes to the victim in his final moments.

Then, if not before, he was felled, for the next injuries were produced by two shattering blows across the back of the head. The first, inflicted with a sword or dagger, measured more than 10cm and tore through to the inner skull. The second cleaved away a whole chunk of cranium and exposed the brain, the severed portion of bone forming a bloody flap hinged with skin. The weapon responsible is most likely to have been some form of pole-axe.

These, of course, were mortal wounds. The King would probably have been killed instantly, but even if not, he would have lost consciousness and then have stopped breathing within minutes at the most.

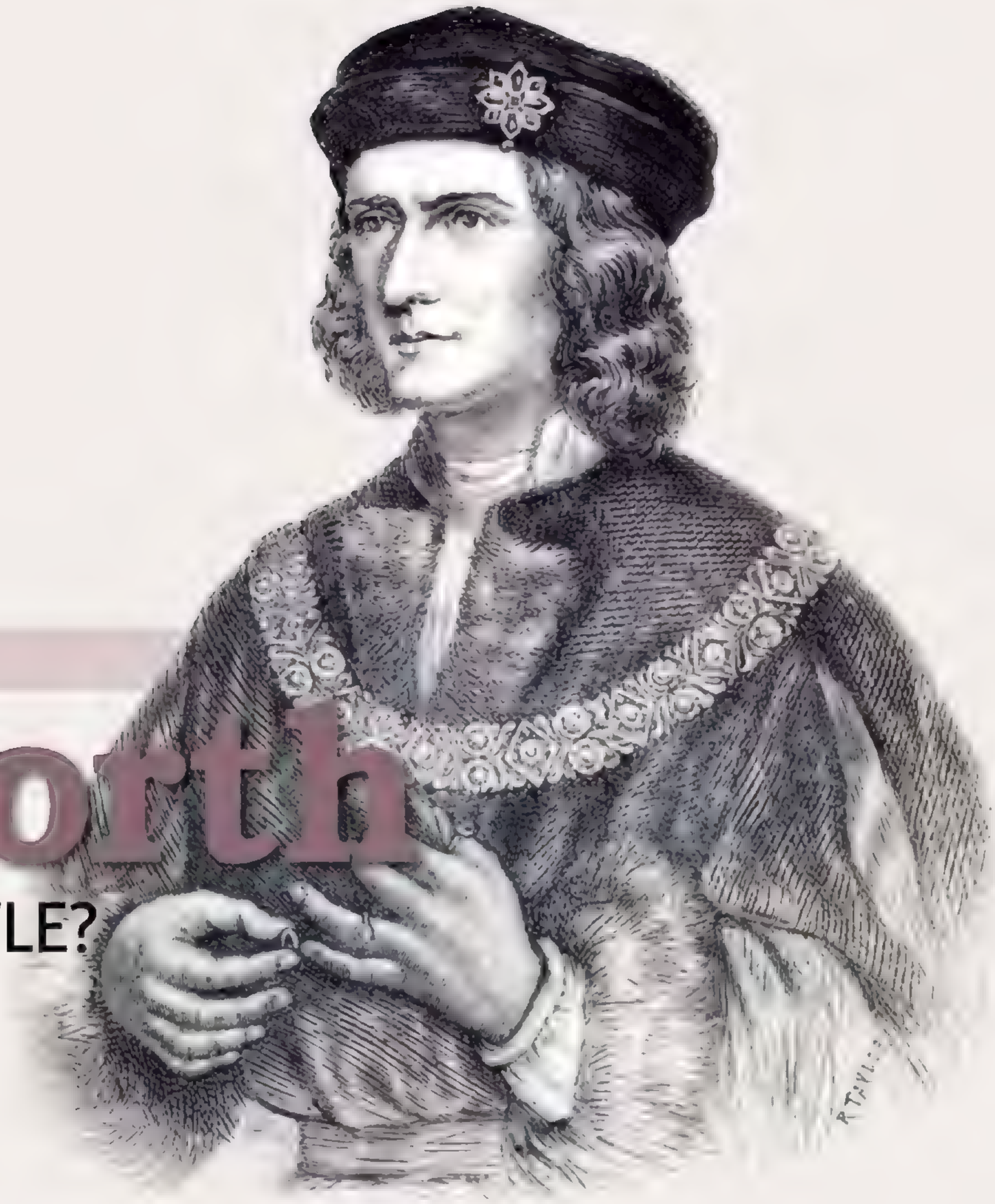


Above The weapons that killed the King? A selection of late-15th-century English bills.

The corpse of Richard III had an existence beyond the life of the King. The skeletal remains bear the marks of probable postmortem injuries, some perhaps inflicted on the battlefield, others perhaps when the body was conveyed to Leicester stripped naked and slung over the back of a horse.

There it was displayed for all to see, for Henry Tudor had urgent need to broadcast the message that the Yorkist monarch was dead, lest false claimants arise to challenge the victor's right to rule.

Then, having been sufficiently exposed, gawped at, and turned into an object of contempt and triumphalism, Richard of York's body was dumped without ceremony in a small, hastily dug pit in the grounds of Grey Friars. And there he would lie, forgotten for more than half a millennium, until his spectacular resurrection in 2012. ▷



THE EVIDENCE

Bosworth

AN 'IMAGINED' BATTLE?

Is there anything more to be said about Bosworth? **Chris Skidmore** thinks so. With a new book just out, he takes a fresh look at the evidence.

The date 1485 is seared into our national memory. There is good reason to consider it one of the key events in British history. The Battle of Bosworth, where the 28-year-old Henry Tudor defeated Richard III, was the moment when the Tudor dynasty was founded and England was launched into the modern world.

Yet, for all its fame as one of the most significant battles in British history, Bosworth remains tantalisingly elusive to the historian. Archaeological discoveries, on the other hand, are beginning to transform our understanding of the battle – specifically, where it was fought, what kind of artillery was used, and how King Richard died.

But the historical archives also contain hitherto unexplored mines of fresh data. They can help us discover who was present at the battle and the fate they suffered. And these details can enable us to piece together a portrait of the battle that reveals it not just as a contest between Yorkist king and Tudor challenger, but as a struggle between thousands of other individuals, many of whom met their deaths, during little more than two hours of action on the morning of 22 August 1485.

Names, fates, and a 'victorious felde'

The records, mainly stored at the National Archives, reveal the names and fates of many participants in what was afterwards called 'our victorious felde'. Regardless of whether they had fallen fighting for or against his standard, Henry ordered that every man should be given 'a decent burial'. Ballads composed after the battle recall how such noble dead as the Duke of Norfolk 'and many more' were carried from the field 'boldly' on biers.

Many were buried near the parish church of St James at nearby Dadlington. The churchwardens, over 25 years later, petitioned Henry VIII to recognise the significance of its location 'standing upon a parcel of the ground where Bosworth feld, otherwise called Dadlyngton feld, in our county of Leicester was done'. They requested that a battlefield chapel might be constructed where 'the bodies or bones of the men slain in the said field be brought and buried'.

As the armour was pulled from the lifeless carcasses, other men lay strewn across the battlefield, alive but injured, some so severely that they had little chance of survival. John Mynde, a Shropshire gentleman who had survived the battle, had received 'such grevious hurts and bresurs' during the fighting that he died soon after. He had fought alongside his son John and six others, several of whom had been 'right grievously hurt, and some of them maimed for ever'.

Above King Richard III (1483-1485).

Many others survived, though with life-changing injuries. Peter Peirse of Bedale lost a leg, but lived 'long after', while Gilbert Talbot, who was knighted shortly after the battle, had been 'sore wounded at Bosworth'. Roger Acton later petitioned Henry VII, telling how he had fought 'in your victorious feld and under your standard and there sore hurt'.

Battle trauma

Many of the wounded must have been taken to Leicester for treatment. Three years after the battle, Henry granted to the mayor and burgesses of Leicester an annuity of £20 for seven years, noting 'the great costs and charges that they have sustained and borne by our commandment in our journeys, fields, and battles, and of the costs they did and made upon our servants wounded and maimed in our first field'. Also noteworthy is the fact that the office of 'principal surgeon for the king's body' was

granted to William Altoftes, who came from the nearby town of Atherston.

An example of the type of injuries suffered can be found in a surviving manuscript medical textbook in the Bodleian Library that describes how 'a gentleman that was shot at Barnard or Bosard felde' had been hit from behind in the thigh by shot from a 'hackebush' or arquebus; wearing a coat of mail which had protected him, three rings of mail were 'left in his left buttock… by ignorance of the surgeon'.

Twenty years later, with pains in his ankle, the man 'met with an old surgeon' who, examining him, asked 'what armour he wore at that time'. Discovering that he had been wearing a coat of mail, the surgeon deduced that the pieces of mail had worked their way down towards his patient's ankle; cutting it open, he 'found the three mails as bright as could be and so he healed him whereas a plaster could not have and he lived long after'.

Artillery

The fact that both sides employed artillery has long been apparent from the written sources, with Henry's Act of Attainder against Richard's supporters detailing how the King's army was 'mightily armed and defenced with all manner of arms, as guns, bows, arrows, spears, glaives, axes, and all other manner of articles apt or needful to give and cause mighty battle'.

The King's army was 'mightily armed and defenced with all manner of arms, as guns, bows, arrows, spears, glaives, axes, and all other manner of articles apt or needful to give and cause mighty battle'.

The 'Ballad of Bosworth Field' reveals how Richard's army had at least 140 'serpentines' chained together in a row, with as many bombards. Commynes provides evidence that Henry also was equipped with artillery, provided by Charles VIII of France, while he would have had the opportunity to obtain additional ordnance during his journey from castles in Wales and at Stafford, Tamworth, and Lichfield – where, as the 'Ballad' recorded, he had been greeted by a volley of cannon fire. The fact that Sir Richard Guildford had been appointed as Henry's master of the ordnance on 8 August, the day after the landing on the Pembrokeshire coast, confirms the presence of guns in the Tudor array.

In March 2009, the first cannon shot, a 30mm lead ball, was found in a field off Fenn Lanes, several miles west of the presumed location of the battle at Ambion Hill, probable site of the Yorkist camp. Soon the surrounding area had yielded up over 30 similar projectiles. The discovery of so many cannon shot, more than on any other 15th-century European battlefield, provides new insight into the character of the battle.

Most of the lead round-shot unearthed at Bosworth ranges in diameter from less than 30mm up to 94mm. Some of the shot are of solid lead, though others contain an iron cube or pebble or large pieces of flint at their core. It is uncertain whether this was done to save lead or to reduce weight and allow the shot to travel further. Or perhaps it was to reduce the pressures placed on the gun barrel of the cannon, fashioned as they were from wrought iron rather than cast iron or bronze (a technology that did not develop until the 16th century).

The varied diameters of the finds made so far show that there were at least ten pieces of artillery on the battlefield and two hand-cannons. The largest shot found represents the largest field-artillery piece in common use at the time, while some of the cannon balls show evidence of having been fired from an octagonal rather than a round barrel, with edges scored into the lead as they were fired.

Classical maxims

The action of Sir William Stanley – joining Henry Tudor's forces at the last moment and sweeping Richard into the marsh to meet his death – is often assumed to have decided the battle. But this ignores the vital role of John de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, in crushing Richard's vanguard, led by the Duke of Norfolk, ▷

Left Burgundian infantry of the late 15th century. A contingent of Burgundians is believed to have served in Henry Tudor's army at Bosworth. Note the relatively full armour of even ordinary foot-soldiers.

Above German handgunners of the 15th century. Increasing numbers of handgunners were fighting alongside archers by this time: not because they were more effective, but because men could be recruited and trained to use handguns far more easily.

Right Two types of artillery in action during the storming of a walled town, one a large-barrelled gun of hooped wrought-iron construction, the other a multi-barrelled composite weapon. Note also the heavy armour and bills of the assaulting infantry – typical of mid-15th-century men-at-arms.

the demise of which precipitated the king's kamikaze charge towards Henry's standard (see previous article 'How did Richard III die?').

Oxford's forces, despite being fewer in number, appear to have defeated Norfolk by utilising a textbook military manoeuvre. The main source for this is Polydore Vergil (though the Latin account in an original manuscript in the Vatican Library differs markedly from that commonly referred to).

Soon after the first clash of the opposing vanguards, Oxford concluded that his men were pushing too far into Norfolk's ranks. Fearing that they might be subsumed and 'completely encircled' by the greater numbers of Richard's long battle-line, the Earl sent out an order through the ranks 'that no soldier was to advance four feet from the standards' (though in relating the detail of the manoeuvre, Vergil later changed the distance to ten feet).

Oxford's orders were classic textbook advice. It seems that he was a keen follower of Christine de Pizan's *Fais d'armes et de chevalerie*, a contemporary

work based largely on the Classical text *De Re Militari* by Flavius Renatus Vegetius.

The Earl could speak both English and French – a later inventory records that he owned 'a chest full of French and English books' worth £3 6s 8d. William Caxton would later translate *The Four Sons of Aymon* 'out of French at the request and comandment of ye right noble and virtuous Earl, John Earl of Oxford, my good, singular and especial lord'. More revealing still is the fact that Caxton would also later be asked by Henry to translate the *Fais d'armes et de chevalerie* into English, with Oxford in person handing him the book.

Oxford seems to have followed Pizan to the letter. She advised that troops should keep within a set 'interval or distance' so that 'men ought to see by great care that they overpress not each other' nor drift too far away; to allow either, she warned, would either 'lose their strokes and their fighting for lack of more room and space' or 'give to their enemies an entry through themself, and so were they in peril to be broken'.

Redressing the line

For Oxford, there was perhaps a more personal reason for issuing his order. He had learnt from bitter experience 14 years before at the Battle of Barnet of the need to maintain a tight formation. There his troops had lost the battle through becoming too detached from the main army. When the battle had turned 90 degrees upon itself, in the confusion and poor visibility, the Earl had ended up attacking his own Lancastrian side. It had been a painful lesson. Oxford was determined not to repeat the mistake. Thus the order.

Upon receipt of it, the Earl's men 'crowded together and withdrew a short way from the battle'. This seems to have caused a brief pause in the fighting. Norfolk's vanguard 'terrified and suspecting a trick because of this, also stopped fighting for a short time'.

Oxford then renewed his attack on Norfolk. Vergil relates how the Earl 'collected his squadrons together and attacked the enemy on one side'. This chimes with another report by the Burgundian chronicler Molinet. He describes Henry Tudor's French troops advising on how best to avoid Richard's cannon-fire – namely, 'by assembling on the side of the king rather than facing him'.

In effect, Oxford was placing all of Henry's strength on his left wing. In doing so, he was once again following Christine de Pizan's advice: commanders should, she declared, 'take most heed of that whether thou fight with thy right wing, or thy left wing, or thy centre' and to 'set thy strongest and mightiest and wisest fighters that thou hast, both horsemen, foot-men, and archers, there where the burden and brunt of the battle will be'.

Commanders should 'set thy strongest and mightiest and wisest fighters that thou hast, both horsemen, foot-men, and archers, there where the burden and brunt of the battle will be'.

The second onset

The sources imply that the result was that the battle swung around, such that Richard's men now found themselves fighting with the sun in their eyes. One ballad, 'The Rose of England', recalls that Oxford's manoeuvre, in relation to Norfolk's men, was deliberately designed to 'the sun and wind of them to get'.

The position of the morning sun across the battlefield is crucial here: the actual date of the battle according to the modern calendar was 13 August, when, early in the morning, the sun rises from an easterly direction, moving across the sky at approximately 15 degrees each hour.

At the start of the battle, from where Richard's forces were positioned along the brow of Ambion Hill and Sutton Cheney, the sun would have been roughly behind them. As the hours passed, and the sun rose in the sky, its position would have moved to a place between the two forces. As the battle went on and the sun rose in the sky and swung round to a more midway point, the advantage that Norfolk would have had at the beginning of the battle would slowly have been lost.

Suddenly, Polydore Vergil's account does not make sense. Either Oxford had no need to manoeuvre in order to gain the advantage of the sun – it was coming his way in any case – or, if he did, he could not have achieved it simply by assaulting Norfolk's right flank. On the other hand, Christine de Pizan's treatise specifically refers to the kind of manoeuvre attributed to Oxford as a means by which a small army might defeat a larger one.

An ideal battle?

An interesting possibility arises. Vergil's version of events implies that Oxford's military judgements followed Pizan to the letter, as if Bosworth were a perfect exemplar of the principles of battle set down by Vegetius and translated by Pizan. The only source that describes this complicated manoeuvre is Polydore Vergil; none other provides any corroboration. Vergil arrived in England in 1502 and did not begin his work until around 1508, by which time most of the leading participants in the battle were dead, with the notable exception of the Earl of Oxford.

Oxford, we know, had a clear interest in Pizan's treatise, handing the work to William Caxton to translate in 1489. Could it be that the Earl wished Vergil's account of the battle to depict him in the role of the Classical military general executing textbook manoeuvres? Should we view Oxford as some sort of military 'Renaissance man' – one who venerated the ancient texts and regarded them as a source of exemplars for contemporary conduct?

Oxford is likely to have been one of the principal sources for Vergil's account. In relating his own version of the battle to the Italian historian, might he not have helped to create, for his own purposes, an imagined, idealised narrative culled more from the pages of Pizan and Vegetius than from any memory of actual events on the marshy plain of Bosworth a quarter of a century before?

Left A 15th-century French illuminated manuscript illustration of artillery in action against town walls. The guns comprise wrought-iron strips welded together and then strengthened with iron hoops. They had a tendency to explode, and could be more lethal to their operators than to the enemy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Skidmore MP is the author of *Bosworth: the birth of the Tudors*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, price £20.

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THE TURTLE SHIP

Eric Bryan studies the design of a deadly 16th-century Korean war-vessel.

In 1591, with the threat of foreign invasion in mind, Korean Admiral Yi Sunshin collaborated on the design of a vessel called a *kobukson*, or 'turtle ship'. The ship was based partly on a design going back to at least the early 16th century, and partly on the standard Korean warship, the *panokseon*.

Admiral Yi and his team completed the first new turtle ship in 1592, in time for its participation in the Seven Year War (1592-1598).

Dimensions and construction

Allowing for variations between individual vessels, the turtle ship was an ark-like vessel of 100 to 120 feet in length, 20 or more feet in height, with a beam of 30 or more feet. It had two sails, each with a fold-down mast, a dragon's head at the bow, and a tail at the stern.

Most distinctively, the vessel had a turtle shell-like roof capping the top deck. This shell was covered in heavy planking and bristled with protruding iron spikes to deter enemy boarders. A turtle ship's crew could camouflage the spikes with mats, empty sacks, thatch, or straw, creating a minefield of sharp points and blades to greet unsuspecting raiders.

There is controversy over whether or not the shell of the turtle ship was iron-armoured. Contemporary Korean sources refer to the spikes, but a contemporary Japanese record mentions turtle boats being 'covered in iron'. Whether the latter reference indicates iron plating or simply a thick peppering of iron spikes is still debated.

Some vessels had a gargoyle-like face painted below the dragon's head, which was a reinforced structure for ramming.

The frame of the ship was constructed of interlocking beams, perhaps using a mortise and tenon method or something similar. The vessels are believed to have been made of spruce, red pine, or other dense wood so that the ship could carry heavy armament and withstand cannon recoil. Nails or fasteners of the same wood may have been used in place of iron, not only to avoid rusting, but because their expansion when exposed to water would further tauten the joints.

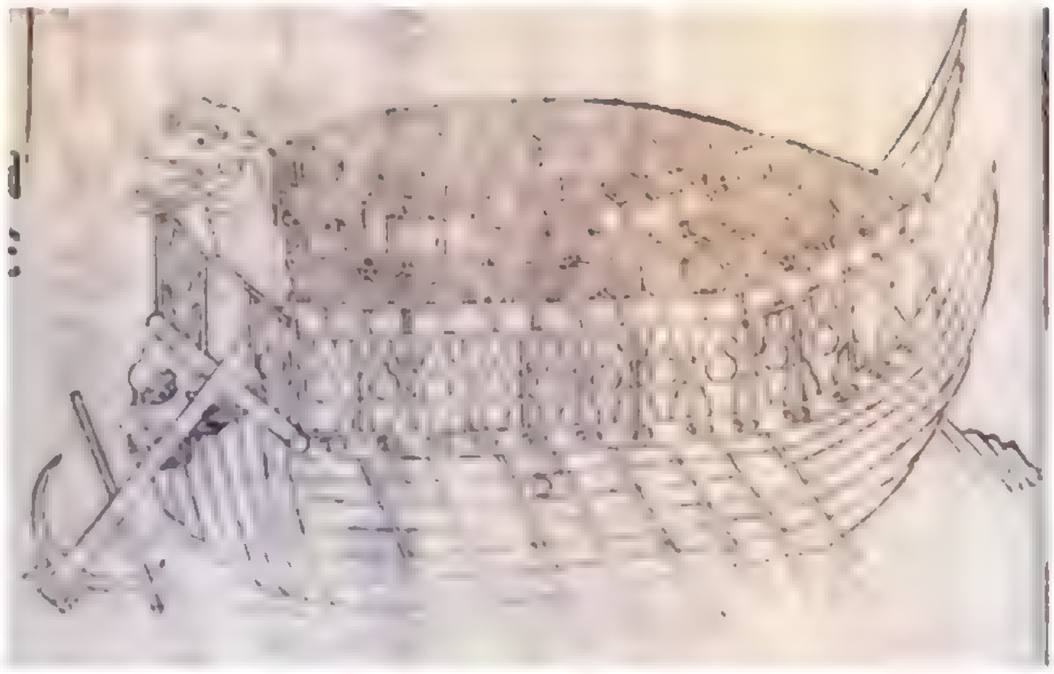
Right A replica turtle ship in the War Memorial of Korea, in Seoul.

The turtle ship had two interior decks: the lower for the oarsmen; the upper for the gunners and archers. (In one Japanese painting, the ships were portrayed as three-deck leviathans with soldiers, archers, and gunners each on separate decks.) The ship's fortress-like design allowed its occupants to view outside, while they remained invisible to their enemies.

Armament, propulsion, and crew

Besides the sails, a turtle ship had eight to 10 oars per side – each operated by as many as four oarsmen and one leader – which powered the vessel. This aspect made the ship highly manoeuvrable and adept as a close-combat vessel.

Below A 16th-century Korean turtle ship, in a depiction that dates to 1795. The woodblock print is based on a contemporary, late-18th-century model.



A turtle ship's crew might be made up of 80 non-combatants and 45 combatants, depending on its quantity of oars and cannon. While its non-combatants were rowers and rowing leaders, its combatants were gunners, munitions chargers, and archers.

With typically six to 11 cannon ports per side, a turtle ship also had two cannon ports each in the bow and stern, allowing the vessel to fire in any direction. The ships carried a range of light to heavy cannon. The medium-range cannon could shoot flaming arrows or cannonballs. The heaviest cannon, called *Chon* ('Heaven'), had a range of perhaps over 650 yards.

The dragon's head at the bow of the ship was not purely an intimidating ornament of psychological warfare. The edifice was so designed that a cannon could be fired through its mouth, propelling cannonballs or flaming arrows from its jaws. Some turtle ships' dragon's heads could expel clouds of noxious vapour created from a saltpetre and sulphur mixture. This tactic could not only leave enemies choking and gasping, but provide a smokescreen to mask the turtle ship's manoeuvres.

The turtle-ship design was used into the 19th century.

A History of the

BRITISH ARMY

IN 25 BATTLES

IMPHAL, 1944

IMPHAL, 1944

Men of the 10th Gurkha Rifles clear enemy positions on 'Scraggy', one of the hills forming the Shenam Saddle position, site of some of the fiercest fighting on the Imphal perimeter during the epic battle in the spring of 1944. The duration and intensity of the struggle at Imphal bore comparison with the Somme and Passchendaele in the First World War.
Right Lieutenant-General (later Field-Marshal) Sir William Joseph Slim (1891-1970), commander of the 14th Army (as it became) from late 1942 to mid 1945.

Main photo: © NAM

A History of the **BRITISH ARMY** IN 25 BATTLES

IMPHAL, 1944

IMPHAL

8 March-3 July 1944

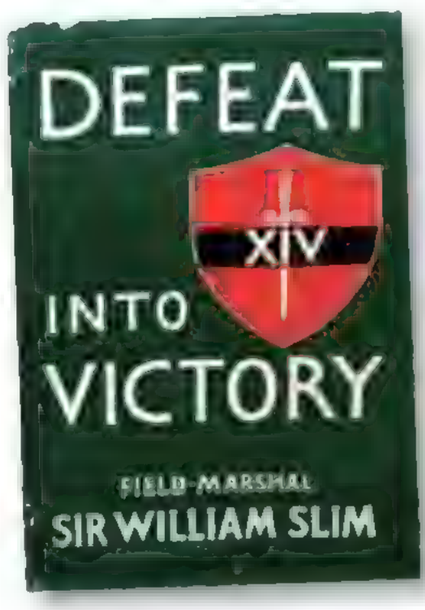
It was fought by 'the forgotten army', but the lessons of the grim struggle for Burma would be long-remembered by the post-war military. We conclude our history of the British Army from 1645 to 1945 with an analysis of the battle that launched Britain's surge to victory against Imperial Japan at the end of World War II.

Britain's wars in North Africa, Italy, and north-west Europe between 1939 and 1945 were intimately linked. Victory in North Africa led directly to the invasion of Italy. Subsequent stalemate in Italy intensified pressure to open a 'second front' in north-west Europe. Many commanders and units served in more than one theatre. Montgomery held commands in all three.

These campaigns, moreover, being closer to home and more accessible to the London-based media, dominated popular consciousness of the war. This reflected an important reality: all the campaigns were directed against Nazi Germany, which was a real and present danger to the security of Britain itself, as Operation Sealion, the Blitz, and the Battle of the Atlantic demonstrated. That the Bomber Offensive was mounted from bases widely distributed across southern England further tightened the focus on Europe and the Mediterranean.

Little wonder that the Burma campaign, waged half a world away against a remote enemy who constituted no direct threat to the homeland, produced the war's 'forgotten army'. That this was an Anglo-Indian army did not help, nor did the fact that its commander was an Indian Army officer.

Ever since the Mutiny, the British and Indian Armies had maintained formal independence of one another while



Left One of the finest war memoirs ever written by a great commander – Slim's account of the Burma campaign.

remaining intimately connected. Many officers saw service in both armies, and British regiments were routinely deployed to India, where typically they would provide a third of the troops available. The other two-thirds would, of course, be Indian native troops, recruited predominantly from the more martial races; but all senior commands and many junior commands in the Indian Army were still held by British officers. There were therefore two British officer-corps in India, one for each army, and a degree of professional rivalry and distrust existed between them.

Uncle Bill

Lieutenant-General William Slim, commander of the 14th Army on the Burma front, was a latter-day embodiment of the Anglo-Indian military tradition. A career soldier and a wounded First World War veteran, he had transferred to the Indian Army in 1919, serving there until 1934, when he returned home to take up a series of staff appointments. Having fought in North Africa and then the Middle East in the early part of the war, he went back to India and was promoted to lieutenant-general in 1942.

His first duty there was to manage the shambolic withdrawal of the Anglo-Indian forces defeated in the Japanese conquest of Burma. He then began the long process of creating and training a new army – the 14th Army – with the capacity to take on the Japanese and recover Burma for the British Empire. The defence of Kohima and Imphal between March and July 1944 tested that new army's mettle to its limit.

Slim was perfectly suited to the role. He was, without doubt, the finest British general of the Second World War. Unpretentious, easy to work with, and possessed of abundant good sense, his relations with his men were intimate

> Slim's relations with his men were intimate and relaxed, and they rewarded him with an affection rare among British soldiers.

All images: WIPL, unless otherwise stated

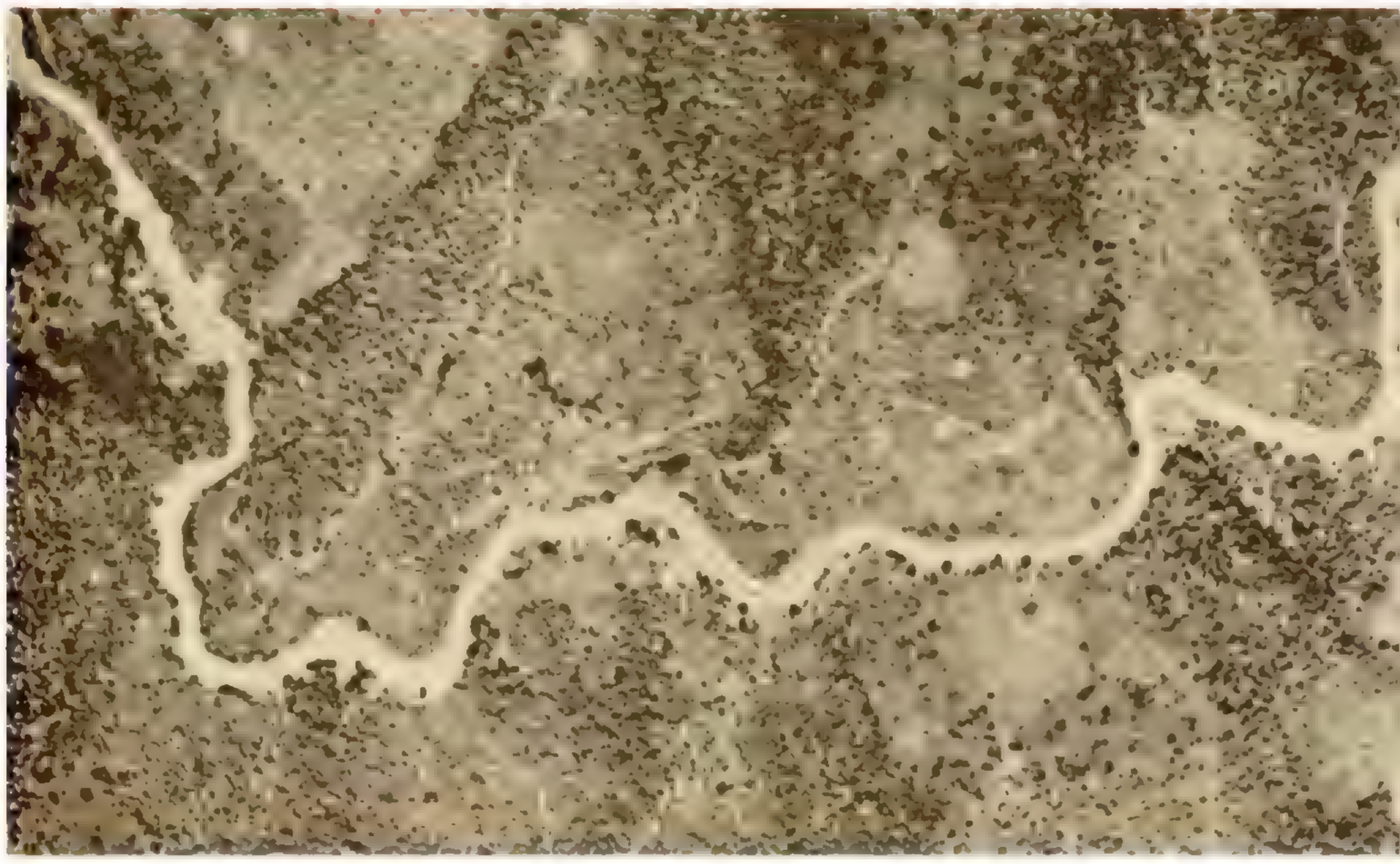
Jungle warfare was fought close-up with rifles, grenades, machine-guns, and mortars. **[Above right]** A Bren-gunner and a rifleman of the 1st Punjabis defend a jungle position. **[Right]** The crew of a Japanese 81mm mortar in a jungle dugout.

and relaxed, and they rewarded him with an affection rare among British soldiers. Marlborough's men had known their commander as 'Corporal John'; Slim's men knew him as 'Uncle Bill'. His biographer, Ronald Lewin, has written of him, 'Few men have surpassed William Joseph Slim in that gift which Liddell Hart attributed to Marlborough – "the power of commanding affection while communicating energy". His military distinction was founded on his humanity.'

Success in building human relationships is one essential ingredient of greatness in war. An ability to energise others with one's own dynamism and willpower is another. Mastery of strategy and tactics, defensive and offensive, is another – including the flexibility necessary to adapt the principles of war to the concrete realities of the battleground. All of these qualities were displayed to the full by Bill Slim.

His own account of the Burma campaign – *Defeat into Victory* – is considered one of the finest memoirs ever written by a great commander. It affords an intimate insight into the campaign, its rigours, the rugged fighting-power of the men of the 14th Army, and, not least, the mind of the commander-in-chief. Something of the man is revealed by the tribute he pays his sergeant-major from cadet days. Slim claims to have learnt the only real principle of war from his sergeant-major: 'Hit the other fellow, as quick as ▷

Below Japanese infantry moving down a jungle track. The jungle minimised Anglo-American advantages in firepower, and maximised initial Japanese superiority in basic fieldcraft. Slim's great achievement was to turn the 14th Army into a military machine capable of winning a jungle war against the Japanese.



Above These two wartime photographs, one taken from the air showing the mountain road between Imphal and Tiddim, the other a view of the road between Imphal and Ukhrul, show why logistics were decisive to the outcome of the Imphal campaign.

you can, and as hard as you can, where it hurts him most, when he ain't looking.' Thus did Slim turn the tables on the Japanese in Burma.

The 14th Army

Slim was the last of the great 'sepoy generals', and the Burma campaign was the last major war fought by the old Anglo-Indian army. For 200 years, since the time of Robert Clive, the India service had been a training ground for the British Army. Wellington learnt his trade fighting the Marathas and considered Assaye his toughest battle. Roberts, the conqueror of the Boers, had previously spent 40 years in India, marching an army from Kabul to Kandahar during the Second Afghan War. Haig served as both Inspector-General of Cavalry and Chief of Staff in India before the First World War. India was in the blood of the British officer-corps.

It was all about to end. Most of the Indian Army's two million troops were not deployed fighting the Japanese at all; they were dispersed across India itself, stationed to contain a rising tide of nationalism that the more intelligent administrators knew would be unstoppable after the war. Independence was coming, and when it did, the old imperial army would perish.

Churchill's determination to fight far-flung campaigns in defence of distant colonies was a doomed project. Britain's SEAC – South East Asia Command – was dubbed 'Save England's Asian Colonies' by the Americans. The latter were singularly reluctant to support the Burma campaign. The British reconquest was to involve fighting down the length of the country from the Indian border partly because the Americans refused to supply the landing-craft for a direct assault on Rangoon. Churchill's comment was that going into the jungle against the Japanese was like getting into the sea with a shark.

> We all talk about fighting to the last man and the last bullet. The Japanese soldier was the only one who did.

As things turned out, it all proved very short-term. Britain was bankrupted by the war, becoming a financial dependency of the United States. When the Eden government sent an army to Egypt in 1956, the Americans called time on the British Empire by threatening to cut off the flow of dollar loans. The retreat from empire thereafter was rapid. In 1945, the British controlled the destinies of 700 million foreigners; by 1965, they ruled a mere five million.

Nonetheless, the Burma experience would be of great relevance to the counterinsurgency operations in which the post-war Army would often be engaged. That this was so had much to do with the way in which the fertile mind of Bill Slim grappled with the military challenges facing him between 1942 and 1945. He learnt the main lessons managing the long retreat from Burma in 1942. He applied them to the rebuilding of his army on the India–Burma border during 1943. And in early 1944, facing a fierce Japanese offensive designed to wreck his own plans for an invasion of Burma, he managed his army in such a way as to break the back of his assailants.

The Japanese soldier

'The most formidable individual soldier in the world': that is how Lieutenant-General Geoffrey Evans, a senior commander during the reconquest of Burma in 1944-1945, described the Japanese infantryman. Bill Slim shared the assessment. Warm in his praise of his own men's achievements, proud that he had turned the 14th Army into a fighting machine capable of defeating the Japanese in the jungle warfare of which they had made themselves masters, he nonetheless paid tribute to the enemy: 'We all talk about fighting to the last man and the last bullet. The Japanese soldier was the only one who did.'

The Meiji Restoration of 1867-1869 had destroyed Japan's ancient feudal regime and replaced it with a government of conservative reformers who understood that national independence required an industrial revolution and a modern army. Facing continuing resistance from traditional forces, however, the regime became increasingly repressive, authoritarian, and militaristic.

In 1894, the Japanese had participated in the imperial dismemberment of China. Ten years later, they had defeated

Right Burma and north-eastern India in 1944 showing the main theatres of war. The Japanese plan for early that year was to distract Slim's 14th Army with offensive thrusts in Arakan and at Tiddim and Tamu, with the intention of breaking through on the Ukhrul axis and cutting the north–south road by which Imphal was supplied.

the Russians in a struggle for control of Korea and Manchuria. Ten years after that, they had entered the First World War and mopped up German possessions in China. In the half century after the Meiji Restoration, Japan's rulers had recast themselves as a class of modern warlord-imperialists: samurai with battleships.

The 14th Army faced men who fought with the ethos and ferocity of 16th-century samurai and the rifles, machine-guns, and mortars of 20th-century industrialised warfare. Moreover, fighting in the jungle, Japan's relative disadvantage in firepower was minimised. The Imperial Army was relatively low-tech. Reliance was placed not on airpower, armour, and artillery, but on the speed, resilience, and fieldcraft of Japanese infantry, whose preferred *modus operandi* was rapid infiltration along minor jungle tracks to cut off and surround enemy positions. Communications and logistics were often primitive: the Japanese infantryman was expected to survive on meagre rations, carried on his back, supplemented by whatever he could forage or capture. He was halfway between conventional soldier and guerrilla fighter.

The jungle is no enemy

But no soldier is invincible: all are capable of being killed by bullets, starved to death, or reduced to despair; all are human. And Slim's mission was to build an army that could beat the Japanese.

Central to his conception of the war was that the jungle itself was neutral. It was neither impenetrable nor frightening, and there was no inherent reason why it should favour the Japanese more than their opponents: success was simply a matter of learning the rules of jungle warfare.

The chief characteristics of the jungle, in military terms, were that it impeded mobility, provided cover, and reduced visibility. Because of this, firepower counted for less. Artillery and air-strikes were relatively less important than boots on the ground. If the enemy could not be seen, he could not be bombed; he had to be hunted down. So Slim stressed the importance of patrolling, constant vigilance, all-round defence, and everyone, whatever their formal role, thinking and acting like front-line combatants. Equally, trying to hold continuous fronts and long lines of communication was hopeless in the obscurity of the jungle. Units had to be deployed in boxes, intelligence about ▷

the enemy gathered by patrols, and hostile infiltration neutralised by rapid reaction.

All this required a high degree of self-reliance and initiative on the part of junior officers, NCOs, and rank-and-file soldiers. The 14th was a decentralised army of tough, quick-thinking, hard-fighting men. But it was Slim who made them so, and in the most daunting of circumstances. They had emerged from Burma starving, ragged, exhausted, and beaten. They then remained stuck in festering jungle camps for the best part of two years, before embarking on a year-long campaign against a ferocious enemy in some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world. Many men served for four, five, even six full years.

'It could fairly be described as some of the world's worst country,' wrote Slim, 'breeding the world's worst diseases, and having for half the year at least the world's worst climate. To move even small pack-caravans from Burma to India was so difficult that no proper trading route existed.'

Often moving among his men in the front line, Slim recalled how conversations would sometimes go: 'When I asked a man in his foxhole or sitting beside the track what he was, he would often, instead of answering "I am a Lancashire Fusilier", or "an FOO signaller", or "the Bren gunner of this section", say, "I am four and two", or "Three and ten". He meant that was the number of years and months he had served in the Far East, and the unspoken question in his eyes was, "How many more?" I could not answer him…'.

Yet this was the army that won the Battle of Imphal.

The Imphal position

Imphal, the capital of the Indian province of Manipur, stands within a 700-square-mile plain filled with rice-paddies and surrounded by massive ranges of jungle-covered mountains up to 8,000 feet high. In 1944 there were only three ways in, and of these, only one was capable of carrying motor transport. This was the winding, steeply graded, 130-mile-long mountain road that led from the nearest railhead at Dimapur via Kohima to Imphal.

The road was single-track, passed through countless hairpin bends, and in many parts ran beside precipitous drops. In the rainy season (the monsoon lasted from late May to early October), parts of the road would be rendered impassable by landslides for days on end, and traffic would otherwise slow to a crawl. Two lorries coming in opposite directions were a minor crisis.

Imphal itself was an idyllic colonial retreat like something out of Kipling for half the year, and a steaming swamp subject to torrential rainstorms hurled from grey skies streaked with lightning for the other half. In May 1942, Imphal was plucked suddenly from its time-worn obscurity and cast upon the stage of military history as Bill Slim's army began to arrive at the end of its long march out of Burma. For the next two years, Imphal would be the strategic key to both the British defence of India and British prospects for a reconquest of Burma.

Above (left to right) Major-General David Cowan, commander of 17th Indian Division, based around Tiddim at the start of the battle; Major-General Douglas Gracey, commander of 20th Indian Division, based around Tamu; Lieutenant-General Geoffrey Scoones, commander of 4th Corps at Imphal.

> The key features of the jungle were that it impeded mobility, provided cover, and reduced visibility.

The Imphal Plain was the only feasible place in the region to establish a forward logistical base. It alone had the space to accommodate the airfields, stores, equipment, and manpower of a serious military build-up. The British needed to hold the position to block further Japanese advance and to prepare their own counter-offensive. For this reason, it was transformed out of all recognition by an army of sappers and labourers in the 18 months after Slim's men first started arriving.

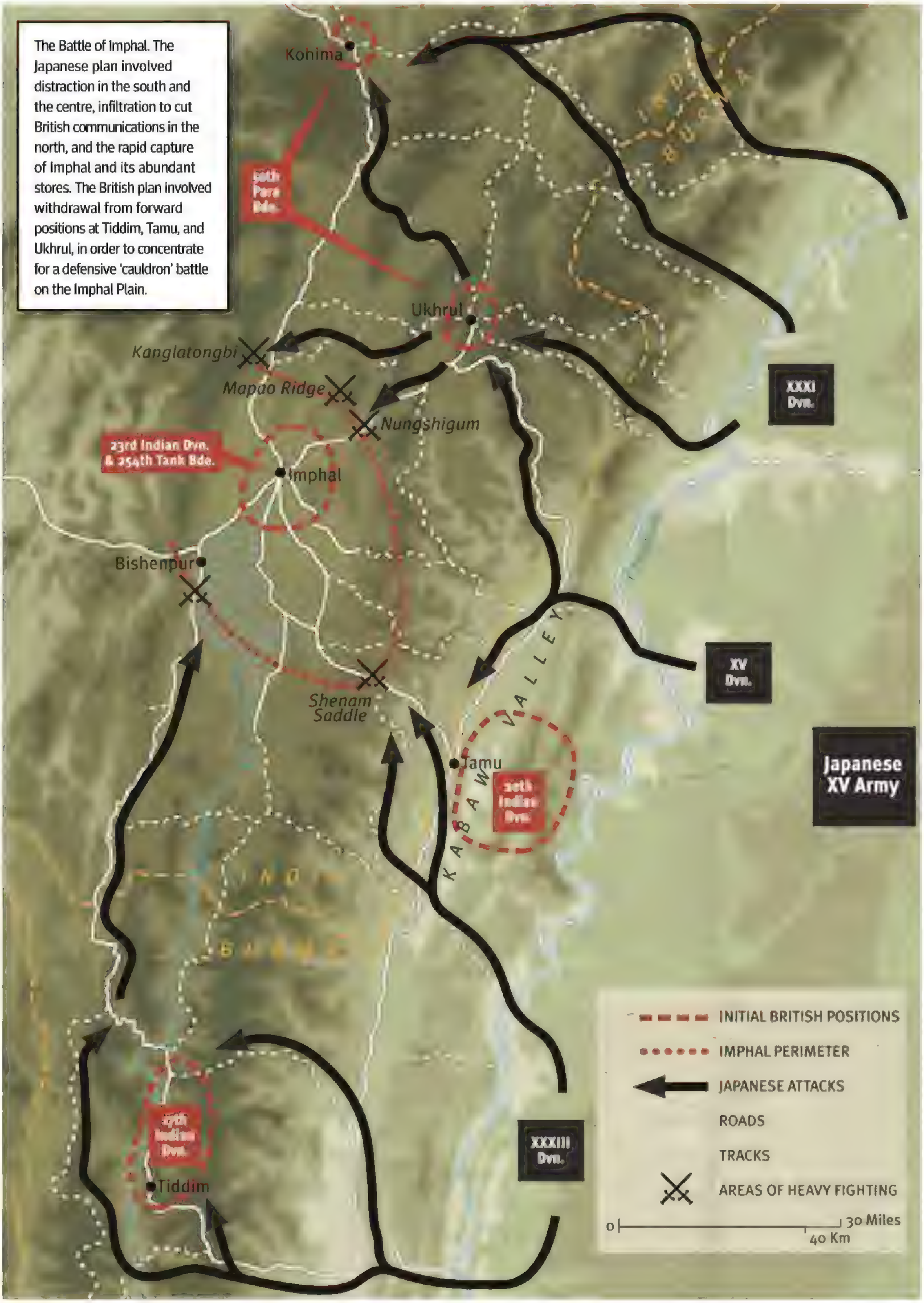
Defending Imphal was General Scoones' 4th Corps. Cowan's 17th Indian Division was deployed in an advanced position around Tiddim, covering the approach from the south. Gracey's 20th Indian Division was centred on Tamu, overlooking the Kabaw Valley, blocking the road from the south-east. The 50th Parachute Brigade was based at Kohima and charged with preventing Japanese infiltration through Ukhrul that would threaten the Dimapur road. Roberts' 23rd Indian Division, supported by the 254th Tank Brigade, was in reserve at Imphal itself.

The Japanese plan

Scoones' deployment was not ideal, but he had little choice. The 17th and 20th Divisions were connected to Imphal by single fair-weather tracks, and separated from each other by a hundred miles of trackless jungle and mountain. Yet without holding these forward positions, he could not prevent Japanese infiltration to cut Imphal's communications and wreck British plans for their own offensive.

The Japanese, for their part, were in no doubt about what was coming: they could see the British build-up. Their response was to plan a pre-emptive strike. Lieutenant-General Mutaguchi, commander of the Japanese XV Army, about 85,000 strong, was ordered to launch an offensive to capture Imphal. ▷

The Battle of Imphal. The Japanese plan involved distraction in the south and the centre, infiltration to cut British communications in the north, and the rapid capture of Imphal and its abundant stores. The British plan involved withdrawal from forward positions at Tiddim, Tamu, and Ukhrul, in order to concentrate for a defensive 'cauldron' battle on the Imphal Plain.



A History of the
BRITISH ARMY
IN 25 BATTLES

IMPHAL, 1944

The Japanese plan involved a double strategic distraction. The main offensive was to be preceded by an offensive at Arakan near the coast, designed to draw Slim's attention and prevent him reinforcing his northern sector, leaving Scoones' 4th Corps to fight alone. Mutaguchi would also mount local diversions, attacking both the 17th Division at Tiddim and the 20th at Tamu, in the hope that his main thrust – on the Ukhrul axis – would then break through to cut the Dimapur road and isolate Imphal from the outside world.

Despite the great secrecy with which the Japanese prepared their offensive, however, the British became aware of the activity. Regular patrolling from forward positions yielded the vital intelligence, and Slim and Scoones made their plans accordingly.

The British plan

The British could not be certain where the main Japanese blow would fall. What they did know was that, wherever it fell, Japanese infiltration would render their forward positions at the end of highly tenuous supply-lines indefensible. Imphal, the key to the strategic situation, was now judged also to be the key to any tactical victory. The British would fall back on Imphal and fight a 'cauldron battle' on the edge of the plain.

Everything pointed towards this as the correct response to the Japanese offensive. The jungle concealed and protected Japanese infantry moving through it, nullifying the British advantage in tanks, guns, and aircraft. It also offered the enemy the opportunity to isolate and surround individual units and destroy them in detail – either in combat or by cutting their supply-lines.

Falling back on Imphal would turn the relatively open Imphal Plain into the main battleground, allowing concentrated firepower to be deployed against an enemy forced to expose himself. It would also shorten British supply-lines while stretching those of the enemy.

But there was a catch. Scoones' plan would mean the severing of the Dimapur road and the isolation of Imphal. The city would be under siege. Assuming the perimeter could be held, three factors would then determine the outcome: the quantities of stores and *matériel* that could be accumulated before the siege began; the capacity of the RAF and the USAAF to airlift supplies into the city as long as the siege lasted; and the speed with which a relief force would be able to fight its way through from the north.

The supply crisis

The Japanese attack opened on the night of 7/8 March and developed from south to north over the following week. Scoones ordered Cowan's and Gracey's divisions to hold their positions for as long as feasible, in order to maximise his window for running supplies and *matériel* into Imphal.

On 13 March, however, Cowan was authorised to retreat, his rearward communications having already been heavily infiltrated. Tough fighting followed as the 17th Division battled

Opposing slit-trenches and foxholes were often yards apart. Dripping bodies rotted in the wire, and an indescribable stench hung over the battlefield.

a series of Japanese lodgements astride the track heading back northwards. Cowan's men finally reached the plain on 4 April, carrying 1,200 casualties with them, and units of the 23rd Division moved into position at Bishenpur on the south-western extent of the perimeter to block further Japanese advance.

Long before this, Gracey's 20th Division had also withdrawn from its forward position and taken station, as prearranged, on the Shenam Saddle on the south-eastern edge of the plain. Further north, Mutaguchi's main thrust had given him control of Ukhrul on 21 March, and the Dimapur road on 29 March. Imphal was thereby cut off and put under siege. Kohima was also surrounded and besieged from 5 April.

By now, however, the 5th Indian Division had been airlifted into Imphal to reinforce the garrison, giving Scoones four full divisions. This was thanks to Admiral Mountbatten's South East Asia Command (SEAC), which conjured up a massive armada of air-transport planes, mainly American Dakotas, to move men, munitions, and supplies over the mountains.

Over a period of about three months, SEAC flew in 19,000 tons of supplies and 12,500 men, and evacuated 13,000 casualties and 43,000 non-combatants. This was done by overworking air-crew, who were living on rotten food in rain-drenched camps (at least once the monsoon broke), to the limit of human endurance. But it was the key to victory in the battle; and it revolutionised warfare.

The largest military air-lift ever attempted, it became the model for the Burma campaign to follow. 'We gradually built up the largest-scale air supply that has ever been seen,' recalled Mountbatten. 'It was not just a question of auxiliary air supply, because 96% of our supplies to the 14th Army went by air. In the course of this campaign we lifted 615,000 tons of supplies…'.

'The problem of supply', explains Correlli Barnett in his history of the British Army, 'was… solved by airpower, by Dakota transports trundling over the mountains to airstrips swiftly constructed close to the ever-advancing spearheads of the army. This was the first time in war that aircraft had been used to nourish a major offensive campaign and to set operations free from the ancient umbilical cord of ground communications.'

The destruction of the Japanese army

The fighting at Imphal was nonetheless long and savage. To the men who fought there, the names of places on the Imphal perimeter – names like Mapao Ridge, Nungshigum, Crete East and West, and Nippon Hill – have the resonance of names like Messines, 'Plugstreet', and Vimy Ridge for earlier soldiers in another war. Hills once covered in jungle were stripped clean. Opposing slit-trenches and foxholes were often yards apart. Dripping bodies rotted in the wire, and an indescribable stench hung over the battlefield.

The Japanese launched ferocious charges, coming on with bayonets and

Above The 1/17th Dogra attacking up a slope at Nungshigum on the northern extent of the Imphal perimeter.

Left Japanese troops rarely surrendered. A British soldier inspects Japanese dead in a jungle ditch.

Top right The 14th Army got cast-offs. Lee-Grant tanks like this one had been replaced by Shermans in the Allied armies massing to invade Normandy. But they were better than anything in the Japanese armoury. British armour, artillery, and airpower were used to maximum effect in the fighting on the Imphal perimeter.

Bottom right Anglo-Indian troops advance across a blasted jungle hillside.

bombs. The mix of Tommies, Indians, and Gurkhas holding the line against them would counterattack to regain ground momentarily lost, in a grim, merciless, unrelenting struggle to hold countless blasted patches of sodden hillside mud. It was a battle of attrition that came as close to the misery of the trenches of 1916 as anything known in the Second World War.

What ended it was starvation. Scoones worried at times about his supply shortage once the monsoon got a grip and reduced heavily the Dakotas' flying-time. His men were already on short rations, and he feared he might have to cut them further.

He need not have worried. The supply crisis was immeasurably worse on the Japanese side. Mutaguchi's strategy had hinged on rapid capture of Imphal and resupply from enemy stores. The carrying capacity of the jungle tracks behind his front line was woefully inadequate. It was further reduced by the waves of Liberators sent over by the RAF and USAAF to bomb the supply-columns.

Geoffrey Evans, who was there, describes the misery of the Japanese collapse, so evident as the victors went forwards in pursuit of the fleeing enemy: 'Occasionally a few determined Japanese made a suicidal stand, but more frequently they were found dead or dying, half naked in the churned-up mud, with abandoned equipment lying everywhere; bombed-out transport columns, charred and black, littered the tracks or the hillside down which they had fallen; in the evil-smelling field hospitals, dead lay on the stretchers on which they had been brought, sometimes with a bullet in their foreheads, their comrades having put them out of their misery before leaving them. Such prisoners as were taken… were in a ghastly condition of disease and starvation.'

An army pushed to the point of physical collapse cannot conduct an orderly retreat. So it was now. The Japanese XV Army fell apart, losing 53,000 of its 85,000 men, and of the survivors, most were afflicted with minor wounds, malnutrition, exhaustion, and profound demoralisation.

British casualties at both Imphal and Kohima had been 17,000. That a majority would live to fight another day was thanks to the quality of the 14th Army's medical services: not the least of Uncle Bill's many achievements.

COMING NEXT

EPILOGUE

THE BRITISH ARMY SINCE 1945

A History of the BRITISH ARMY IN 25 BATTLES

EPILOGUE, POST-1945

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- William T Sherman December 1860"

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GETTYSBURG

Part 2

THE FIRST DAY

Julian Brazier continues his four-part series on America's greatest battle with a detailed analysis of the unplanned opening clashes on 1 July 1863.

As Lee's Army of Northern Virginia swept northward past Washington, angry messages passed up and down the wires between General Hooker, commander of the Army of the Potomac, and Lincoln's military chief-of-staff, General Halleck. Like his Confederate opponent, President Lincoln had refused his army commander's requests for reinforcements, but with better reason than Davis.

Lincoln needed precious brigades in Washington's defences, because the loss of the capital could trigger further secessions from the Union, or European recognition of the Confederacy – both potential game-changers. What worried Lincoln even more was the realisation that Hooker had lost the confidence of his corps commanders after Chancellorsville.

Determined to restore the army's resolve, Lincoln decided to replace Hooker and sent a series of messages to try to persuade each of four corps commanders in succession to take over. Finally, at 2am on 28 June, his fifth choice, General George Meade, an engineer officer, woke in his tent thinking he was being sacked and groggily accepted.

General Meade

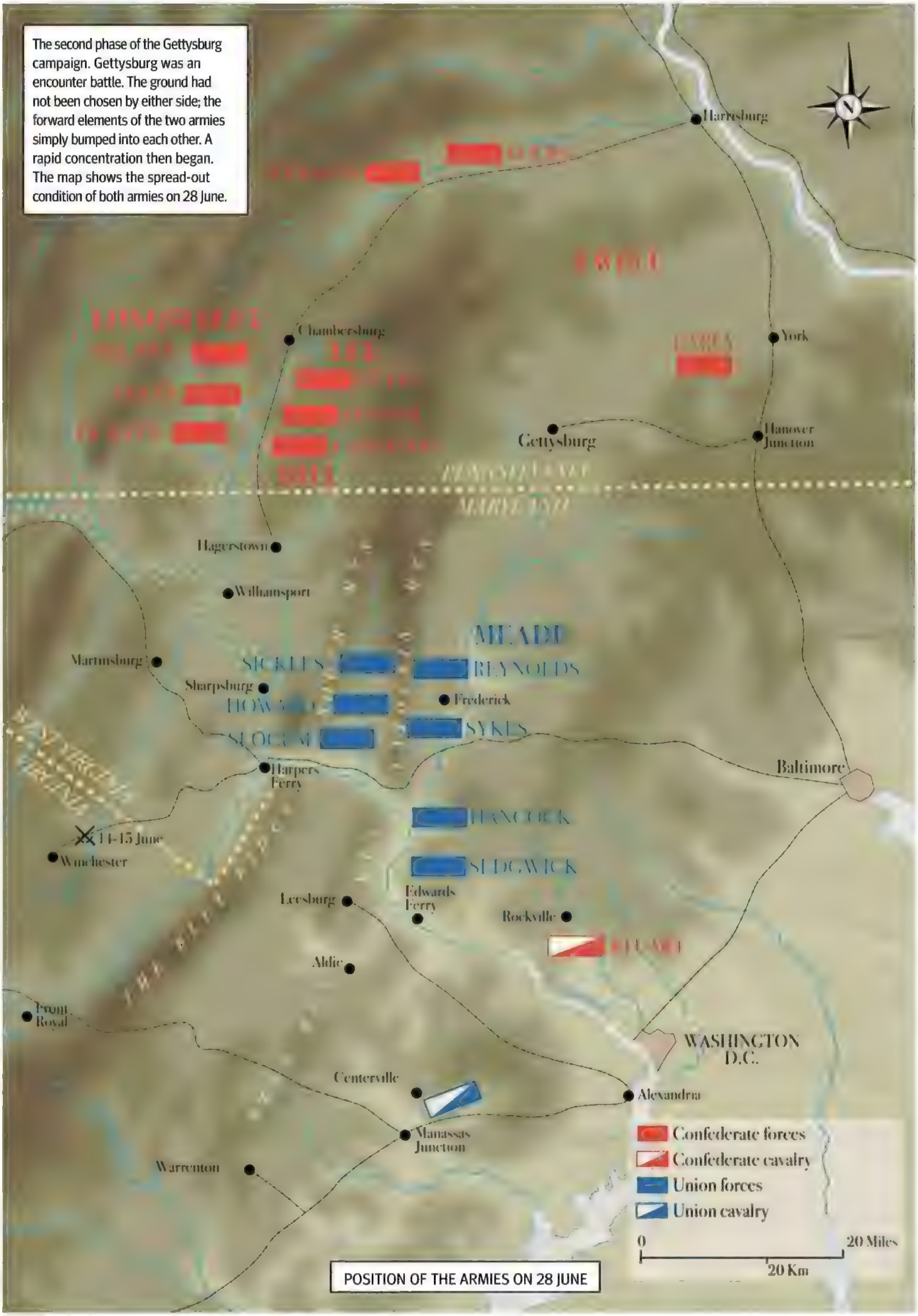
The news was a disappointment to much of the army (and to Congress). The new commander was wholly lacking in charisma and was a Catholic – the Northern states were fiercely Protestant. But the choice inspired confidence among the senior commanders of the Army of the Potomac, who recognised a professional in this quiet, fusty man.

On taking command, Meade expressed concern that his army was 'widely scattered' at a time when the forward elements of Lee's army were already north of him in Pennsylvania. ▷

Top Buford's cavalry scouting ahead of the main Union army in the vicinity of Gettysburg on 30 June 1863.

Right General George Gordon Meade (1815-1872), commander of the Army of the Potomac from June 1863 until the end of the war. Meade lacked dash and brilliance, but he was trusted by his corps commanders for his solid professionalism. Fighting a resolute defensive battle at Gettysburg, he avoided disaster, repelled Lee's invasion, and turned the tide of the war.

The second phase of the Gettysburg campaign. Gettysburg was an encounter battle. The ground had not been chosen by either side; the forward elements of the two armies simply bumped into each other. A rapid concentration then began. The map shows the spread-out condition of both armies on 28 June.



POSITION OF THE ARMIES ON 28 JUNE

Above Buford's Union cavalry formed a dismounted firing-line on McPherson's Ridge, west of Gettysburg, in an effort to slow the advance of A P Hill's Confederate infantry. Buford's aim was to allow time for Union infantry to reach the scene and secure the tactically vital high-ground south of the town.

Below General John F Reynolds, commander of Union 1st Corps, the man many had hoped would become commander of the Army of the Potomac. His infantry were the first to arrive on the battlefield, and he set about improvising a defensive line. He was killed in the thick of the fighting.

But the Army of Northern Virginia was far more strung-out, in a line 90 miles long. Ewell's 2nd Corps had handsomely fulfilled its mission of provisioning the army, reaching as far as York in northern Pennsylvania gathering supplies, but it was a long way ahead of the other corps.

The night after Meade's appointment, a spy reached Longstreet's 1st Corps headquarters, and the general promptly woke Lee to pass on the intelligence he had received: the entire Union army was north of the Potomac, and Meade had taken command.

Still without cavalry to build a more detailed picture, Lee fired out orders for his army to concentrate at a small town called Gettysburg. This choice would enable Ewell and Hill to approach on different roads, a factor crucial for speed, while Longstreet followed Hill. He added in his orders to Ewell, a notoriously aggressive officer, that if any enemy he met proved 'very large, he did not want a general engagement brought on until the rest of the army came up.'

Buford's cavalry

At midday on 30 June, Hill's advance brigade reached Gettysburg – only to encounter a whole division of Union cavalry commanded by General Buford. An afternoon of shadow-boxing developed, as each was unsure of the strength of the other and had sent urgent messages back to their respective commanders. That evening Hill sent a message to Lee that Gettysburg was lightly occupied by enemy cavalry and that he would move to capture it in the morning.

At 8am the next morning, Hill's leading elements struck McPherson's Ridge, held by Buford's dismounted troopers. The leading divisional commander, the newly promoted Harry Heth, had failed to put out skirmishers, despite the absence of friendly cavalry. He expected to meet local Pennsylvania home-guard militia. On reports that the enemy were all dismounted cavalry, he decided that, without any infantry support, it should be easy to brush them aside. Heth was wrong. The cavalrymen fought hard with their new Spencer repeating carbines.

Under mounting pressure, Buford received a message from a lookout that a strong body of infantry reinforcements was approaching just three miles away. A few minutes later, their commander, General John Reynolds, arrived with some of his staff.

Reynolds ordered Buford to hold on for as long as he could and sent a message back to Meade, telling the

messenger to ride his horse to death if necessary. He told Meade that he believed that much of Lee's army faced him, but that he would fight his way back street by street through Gettysburg if necessary, to delay the Confederates. He also dispatched messages to Howard on the road behind him and to Sickles in Emmetsburg to race their corps forward. Then he rode back to his own corps, telling the leading elements to tear down fences to enable a fast march round Gettysburg into the fight.

The Iron Brigade

As the cavalry was beginning to crumble under determined pressure, the first two Union brigades arrived and were expertly positioned by Reynolds opposite the two leading Confederate brigades, with a battery of artillery in support. The famous 1st Brigade – known as the Iron Brigade – collided with a smaller Confederate brigade on the crest of the ridge and drove them back. On seeing their distinctive black felt hats, one Confederate is supposed to have grumbled, 'There are those damned black-hatted fellows again. Taint no militia!'

Meanwhile, the Iron Brigade's commander, 'Long Sol' Meredith, saw that the neighbouring brigade was being driven by a Confederate brigade. This happened to be one of the very few green formations in Lee's army, commanded by a nephew of President Jefferson Davis. They had started well, but many of their field officers were down, and they had become disorganised in victory.

Meredith sent across his reserve battalion, which set a trap for the remains of Davis's force. His men funnelled the attackers into a railway cutting, where hundreds were killed and captured.

Already the butcher's bill was mounting fast on both sides, but the Unionists were winning the first round – except that they had suffered one particular casualty. The lifeless body of John Reynolds – the man both Lincoln and the Army of the Potomac had wanted as their commander – was being carried to the rear.

Close behind Reynolds' 1st Corps, the 'Flying Dutchmen' of 11th Corps arrived and formed up on the right of 1st Corps. But the Confederates were concentrating too, as Rodes' division of Ewell's 2nd Corps poured down the Carlisle road east of Hill's troops towards Gettysburg.

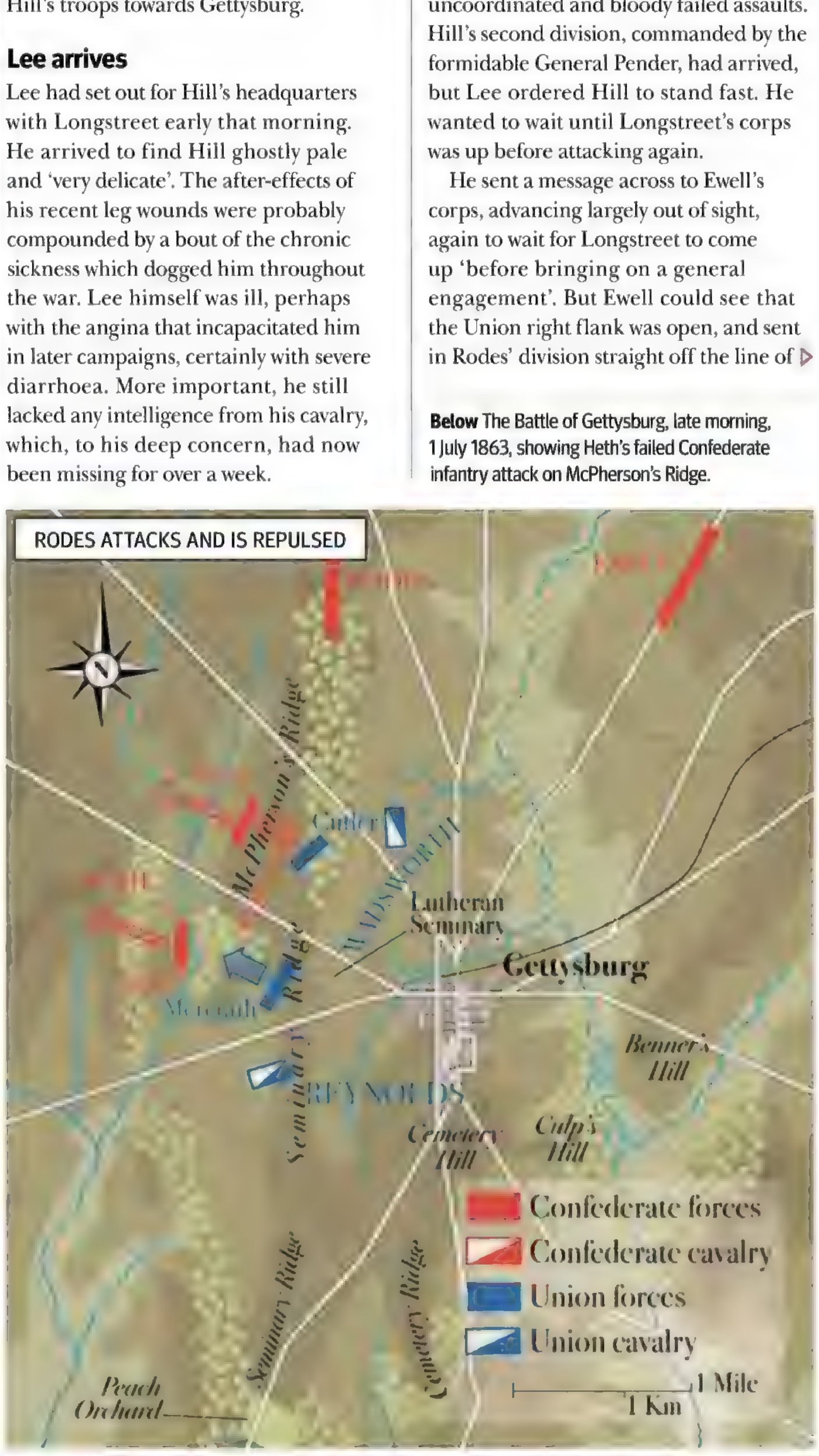
Lee arrives

Lee had set out for Hill's headquarters with Longstreet early that morning. He arrived to find Hill ghostly pale and 'very delicate'. The after-effects of his recent leg wounds were probably compounded by a bout of the chronic sickness which dogged him throughout the war. Lee himself was ill, perhaps with the angina that incapacitated him in later campaigns, certainly with severe diarrhoea. More important, he still lacked any intelligence from his cavalry, which, to his deep concern, had now been missing for over a week.

Hill reported on the action in Gettysburg, and explained that two of his three divisions were at, or closing on, the town. He then set off gamely to take charge. Not wishing to appear to second-guess his new corps commander, Lee gave him a start, then followed him towards the growing sound of gunfire.

Lee reached a prominent vantage-point at around 1pm, in the blazing heat, to see the shattered remnants of Heth's two leading brigades after their uncoordinated and bloody failed assaults. Hill's second division, commanded by the formidable General Pender, had arrived, but Lee ordered Hill to stand fast. He wanted to wait until Longstreet's corps was up before attacking again.

He sent a message across to Ewell's corps, advancing largely out of sight, again to wait for Longstreet to come up 'before bringing on a general engagement'. But Ewell could see that the Union right flank was open, and sent in Rodes' division straight off the line of ▷



Below The Battle of Gettysburg, late morning, 1 July 1863, showing Heth's failed Confederate infantry attack on McPherson's Ridge.

march – a good decision, in the Jackson mould, in the light of his superior knowledge.

Ewell's attack

Lee heard Ewell's artillery, hidden by intermediate ground, open up to his left, and then saw the five brigades of Rodes' division form up for a well-planned attack, three brigades in line with two in close support. Execution fell far short of the plan, however. The central brigade commander, O'Neal, sent in his forces piecemeal and prematurely, only to get bloodily repulsed. On his right, Iverson's brigade followed, running straight into a point-blank ambush and losing two-thirds of its men in a few minutes.

Through his binoculars, Lee saw this second disjointed and bloody failure, and refused permission for Hill to send in Heth's fresh brigades and Pender's division, now also available. Without cavalry, he knew nothing about the large part of the battlefield he could not see, and both the premature assaults appeared to have been disasters.

Then one of Rodes' reserve brigades skilfully drove into a gap in the centre of 1st Corps, where the line kinked. Almost simultaneously, Lee received word from Ewell that the Union right was open and heard artillery supporting Early's division as it attacked 11th Corps, on the far left beyond Rodes.

From apparent disaster, Lee saw a great opportunity emerging. He released Hill's corps, and Heth went in again. Hill sent Pender's troops, weary from a long march but full of spirit, in behind Heth's. The result was some of the hardest fighting of the whole battle.

Below The Battle of Gettysburg, early afternoon, 1 July 1863, showing Ewell's 2nd Corp attack supported by elements of Hill's 3rd Corps.

North Carolina against Michigan

One duel portrays the action – and the war. At the centre of the Confederate line was the 21-year-old 'boy colonel' Harry King Burgwyn – Virginia Military Institute-educated, a wealthy planter's son, the commander of the 26th North Carolina. Opposite was the 24th Michigan, mostly factory-workers from Detroit, commanded by Colonel Henry Morrow, a veteran city judge who had fought in the Mexican War as a militia private. A young face of the old American establishment faced an old face of the new America – but both with a reputation for iron discipline and personal courage.

The North Carolinians advanced towards the woods, part of a divisional line a mile long, 'in a pretty and perfect line', despite enemy fire and the extreme heat. They dipped down into the brambles around a stream, came under heavy fire from enfilading batteries, and drove back skirmishers.

Entering the woods, Burgwyn realigned his reduced command and pressed on into a virtual collision with the 24th Michigan, firing almost toe to toe. The Northerners fell back, with heavy losses on both sides, and Burgwyn pushed through the smoke-filled wood and up towards the crest. There, Morrow had regrouped the remains of the 24th as part of the Union brigade line.

In desperate fighting, both Burgwyn and Morrow were shot down, each clutching his regiment's colours as he sought to rally the remnant of his command. Burgwyn was dead and Morrow, wounded in the heart, captured. Both units suffered over 80% casualties, but the Confederates burst over the crest of McPherson's Ridge and, their line punctured, Union 1st Corps recoiled.

Confederate high-water

Meanwhile, Early's division had attacked the Union right flank straight off their long march, led by the shrieking

Louisiana Tigers. In a short time, the whole of 11th Corps had broken and the 'Flying Dutchmen' were streaming into Gettysburg.

Winkling out the 1st Corps proved harder for Hill's two leading divisions. With Pender's division pressing on behind Heth's, and the 11th Corps torn from their right, the remains of the Union 1st Corps formed up for a last stand on Seminary Ridge.

As Pender's division passed through Heth's exhausted and bloodied troops, the commanding officer of the 6th Wisconsin watched them approach, writing afterwards, 'For a mile up and down the open fields in front, the splendid lines of the Army of Northern Virginia swept down upon us. Their bearing was magnificent.'

One of Buford's cavalry brigades threatened their flank, inducing the nearest brigade to halt and form squares, but the rest swept on, as the remnants of 1st Corps hammered them with deadly volleys. Pressed by an irresistible tide in front, and exposed by the collapse of 11th Corps on their right, the surviving members of 1st Corps finally disintegrated and joined the flight towards Gettysburg. As the triumphant Confederates poured into the town from north and west, they took thousands of prisoners, the Louisiana Tigers capturing more men than their own strength. Half of 11th Corps and an astonishing two-thirds of 1st Corps were now dead, wounded, or prisoners.

While these attacks were going in, a messenger arrived – at last – from Jeb Stuart. Lee's relief that he had restored contact was tempered by the realisation that his cavalry would not reach Gettysburg until the following evening. He was still fighting with no picture of the enemy's wider dispositions.

> The scene was starting to resemble Lee's vision of a Union army strung out and gobbled up in detail.

Above Union artillery and infantry race into action during the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Union rallies

He advanced to a vantage-point near the edge of the town and gave his artillery chief, Pendleton, orders to put down fire on Union troops fleeing across the dominant hill behind Gettysburg, Cemetery Hill. Some 30 guns were immediately to hand. Pendleton moved some of them into position and then (he later claimed) was buttonholed by an infantry brigade commander worried about drawing fire against his own troops. Whatever the truth, no guns opened fire, Pendleton disappeared, and the Union men began to regroup on the hill.

Meantime, Meade had been preparing a strong defensive position 20 miles south of Gettysburg at Pipe Creek. Hearing the news about Reynolds, he had dispatched Hancock, ahead of his 2nd Corps, to take charge. Hancock arrived on Cemetery Hill shortly after 4pm to find the shattered remnants of 1st and 11th Corps streaming past him. General Slocum, commander of 12th Corps, had paused short of the battlefield, unwilling to get embroiled in the developing catastrophe. The scene was starting to resemble Lee's vision of a Union army strung out and gobbled up in detail.

Hancock took up his post on Cemetery Hill. His first tasks were to cope with General Howard, who felt he should be in command and was blaming Reynolds and 1st Corps for the reverse. He also sent a dispatch to energise Slocum. He then rallied the shaken and weary Union remnant, and they began to re-form. Slocum's reinforcements started to arrive an hour later.

In the balance

Delayed by their fight through the town, the Confederates could see artillery arriving on Cemetery Hill and hear the Unionists digging in. As they reached the far side, Harry Hays, commanding the 1st Louisiana Brigade, asked his divisional commander, General Early, for permission to attack. When Early sarcastically remarked that the Tigers surely had had enough blood for one day, the angry Hays replied that he wished to do the deed now to prevent a far bloodier price if they waited until the position became a stronghold.

From his place overlooking the town, Lee sent a verbal message to Ewell to take the hill immediately 'if practicable' – his usual caveat to a responsible subordinate. The messenger, his chief-of-staff Colonel Taylor, delivered the instruction and returned, expecting it to be obeyed. What neither he nor Lee knew was that Ewell, who had lost a leg barely a year earlier, had just been blown off his horse by a shell burst and the corps commander, who normally had to be restrained for over-boldness, seems to have been badly shaken. After a brilliant start days earlier at Winchester and his performance that afternoon, Ewell was no longer his usual self.

Hot on Taylor's heels, a messenger arrived back from Early saying that his ▷

Above General Winfield Scott Hancock, commander of Union 2nd Corps. Arriving late afternoon on 1 July, he found the broken survivors of two Union corps streaming past him on Cemetery Hill. Hancock rallied the Union men, improvised a new line, and began to dig in on the high-ground south of Gettysburg.

corps could not take the hill without support on their right from General Hill to assist with taking neighbouring ground. Lee passed the messenger his binoculars, asking what ground that could be (presumably Cemetery Ridge), and then sent the messenger back to say that Hill's two leading divisions (exhausted by their fight against 1st Corps) would not be able to mount another major attack immediately, but that Ewell's corps (which had had much lighter casualties) should get on and secure Cemetery Hill 'if practicable'.

Longstreet's plan

Shortly afterwards, James Longstreet rode up to say that his two leading divisions were close behind. The two men eyed the slope of Cemetery Hill, with Cemetery Ridge stretching south and ending in two rocky hills, known as the Round Tops. With his eye for defensive ground, Longstreet proclaimed that the Union forces now pouring in had a formidable position and recommended that Lee move his whole army round the Union right, to cut the enemy off from Washington.

Lee heard his most experienced corps commander out, and then explained that such a manoeuvre would fail to capitalise on the demoralising effects of the first day's battering on the enemy and the Confederates' temporary advantage in numbers. Without cavalry to screen it, the proposed manoeuvre would have been virtually impossible to execute successfully anyway.

To Longstreet's continued argument, Lee responded, 'No, the enemy is there and I am going to attack him there.' With that he set off to discover what Ewell's still-immobile corps was up to.

In the meantime, at 6pm, an hour and a half before sunset, Ewell's third division had arrived, under General Johnson. Passing to the east of Gettysburg, they reached the base of Culp's Hill, Cemetery Hill's taller sister. Seeing it was virtually unoccupied, Johnson's brigade commanders agitated to attack, as Early's had done at Cemetery Hill, but, to their frustration, Johnson decided to halt too.

At the same time, to their north-west, Hill's third divisional commander, Anderson, astonishingly, had decided to halt his command and bivouac five miles short of Gettysburg, blocking the imminent approach of Longstreet's corps. Orders had to be sent to get them moving again. With his army scattered and coordination slipping, Lee's lack of a proper staff was never more sorely felt. Yet, with no cavalry for the next crucial 24 hours, Lee was going to have to conserve his tiny staff for essential reconnaissance tasks the next day.

Meade heads for Gettysburg

During the day, from Pipe Creek, Meade had sent out signals to each of his corps commanders and all available forces to concentrate at Gettysburg. In his orders to two of his corps commanders, still on their way, Gibbon and Sickles, he stressed the importance of watching out, during their approach, for a Confederate breakout past their left, between Gettysburg and Emmitsburg – the very manoeuvre Longstreet had so forcefully suggested to Lee.

Three of his corps were now in the area, but the most distant of them, Sedgwick's 6th Corps, was in Manchester 35 miles away. The one useful service Jeb Stuart had delivered for Lee was the disruption of the Union telegraph network, so Sedgwick, commanding the largest of the seven infantry corps in the Army of the Potomac, did not get his orders until 8pm. They were on the road in an hour.

The last of his orders dispatched, Meade rode off into the moonlit night for Gettysburg.

Lee had arrived at sunset to find a subdued Ewell, still recovering from the shell burst that had unhorsed him, and two of his divisional commanders. They told him that the enemy position on Cemetery Hill was now too formidable to capture. The attack needed to focus on the enemy's right – Cemetery Ridge. When Lee suggested that they move to their right to keep the Confederate army concentrated in the assault, they said that giving up the hard-won town would damage morale.

Lee rode back through the dusk having learned that another of his corps commanders seemed to have lost the appetite for battle. In the fading light, he carefully surveyed the ground again, and then sent orders for 2nd Corps to move to their right as earlier discussed – he

Below Confederate dead lined up on a road prior to burial after Gettysburg. By nightfall on the first day, 15,000 men had already become casualties.

did not want them out of touch beyond Cemetery Hill.

Ewell appeared in person to say that a fresh opportunity was offered by Culp's Hill, and he would take it immediately. He returned to his corps in the twilight, but nothing happened. Ewell's information had been hours old. The hill was already strongly held for the Union.

Lee's options

As more troops poured in, Lee took stock. The opportunity had been missed to take Cemetery Hill, with its fields of fire dominating the ground beyond. Such a move would have left the Union army with no strong position before Pipe Creek 20 miles away, and with much of their army strung out between the two points.

Nevertheless, the Confederates had had a successful day, capturing two ridges and the town of Gettysburg, while imposing 9,000 casualties (against 6,000) and driving the enemy back in demoralised flight. The question for Lee was what to do next.

As he examined the best map available (which was less than ideal), he must have felt frustrated. The failure by 2nd Corps to follow through had left him with a long concave line, with wooded areas and Gettysburg itself hampering movement and communication. In contrast, his enemy was on internal lines, with a larger army fast concentrating in front of him.

He decided on a turning motion aimed directly at the Union left flank. Longstreet would have two divisions on the right, those of Hood and McLaws, both highly experienced and capable divisional commanders (Longstreet's third division, that of General Pickett, was not yet up). In the centre, Hill, still unwell, would have two divisions also: one commanded by Anderson, whose slack behaviour at Chancellorsville and earlier in the day was disappointing; the other by Pender, who was experienced and reliable; while Heth's battered command would recover in reserve, its wounded leader replaced by the even-less-experienced Pettigrew. On his far left, beyond Gettysburg, was Ewell's 2nd Corps: what should he do with them?

The silence from the direction of 2nd Corps told him that Ewell had done nothing to take Culp's Hill. With Unionists pouring in during the night, the opportunity for an easy occupation must have been lost. At all costs another uncoordinated attack must be avoided. He decided Ewell should use his three divisions the other side of Cemetery Hill to mount a diversionary demonstration against Cemetery and Culp's Hills – the diversion to become a full attack if Longstreet succeeded in drawing off most of the Union forces in the main attack.

So Lee wrote one final dispatch that night – to tell Ewell that he was to wait and coordinate his assault on Culp's Hill with the sound of Longstreet's guns. He would go to see Ewell once he had sorted out the main attack. Sick and weary, Lee turned in after midnight.

The sentry shook him, as commanded, at 3am to start planning the second day's offensive. At roughly the same time, Meade arrived on the battlefield at the end of his long night-time ride from Pipe Creek.

Both commanders were on the battlefield. Reinforcements were pouring in. Both armies were determined to fight it out in the place where they happened to be. The light would soon be up on another bloody day.

To be continued

By nightfall on 1 July, the Confederates had driven the Unionists from McPherson's Ridge, Seminary Ridge, and the town of Gettysburg. But the Union men had rallied on Cemetery Hill, and now tens of thousands of blue-clad men were coming up fast to fill out the line along the high-ground blocking Lee's way to Washington.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julian Brazier is a former SAS Reserves officer and management consultant. He is now Conservative MP for Canterbury.

MUSEUM GUIDE

With hundreds of military museums in the UK alone, how do you know which one will best suit your interests? Here, ***MHM*** has picked some of the best museums and exhibitions to visit this year, from hidden gems to long-established sites.

Museum of the Great War

France's Musée de la Grande Guerre showcases a unique collection of some 50,000 First World War artefacts in a purpose-built building that attempts to place the First World War in its 20th and 21st Century context.

The museum's collection is truly diverse, including soldiers' and officers' uniforms, weapons, everyday objects from both the frontline and civilian areas, posters, postcards, newspapers, photos, artwork, and engravings.

The museum utilizes state-of-the-art audio-visual systems, interactive displays and current museum expertise to appeal to every visitor. A children's display views the war through eyes of animals, and many other themes are explored, including the role of women in the Great War, medical breakthroughs

WHERE: Rue Lazare Ponticelli, 77100 Meaux, France
OPENING TIMES *May-Sept* 9.30am-6.30pm Mon, Wed-Sun. *Oct-Apr* 10am-5.30pm Mon, Wed-Sun.
CONTACT ***www.museedelagrandeguerre.eu***

The Muckleburgh Military Collection

THE UK'S LARGEST PRIVATELY OWNED MILITARY MUSEUM

The Muckleburgh Military Collection is located in Weybourne, North Norfolk and is set in 300 acres overlooking the beautiful North Norfolk coast. Since the museum opened in 1988, the collection has grown, now comprising 25 working tanks and tracked vehicles with thousands of items on display. It is the official home of the historical records for the Norfolk and Suffolk Yeomanry and has a life-size display of Copenhagen, the Duke of Wellington's horse. It can take around four hours to view all the displays in the museum, passing through the tank halls, artillery hall, diorama displays, vehicle rides, the shop, and the cafe with children's play area. A tank-driving experience is also available to book in advance for £100. We also have our own landing field. Please view www.muckleburgh.co.uk for full details of what is available, opening times, and entrance charges.

WHERE: The Muckleburgh Military Collection, Weybourne, Norfolk, NR25 7EH
OPENING TIMES: 28 March - 3 November 2013 10.00 am - 5.00 pm with last Admissions at 4.00 pm
CONTACT: 01263 588210
info@muckleburgh.co.uk
www.muckleburgh.co.uk

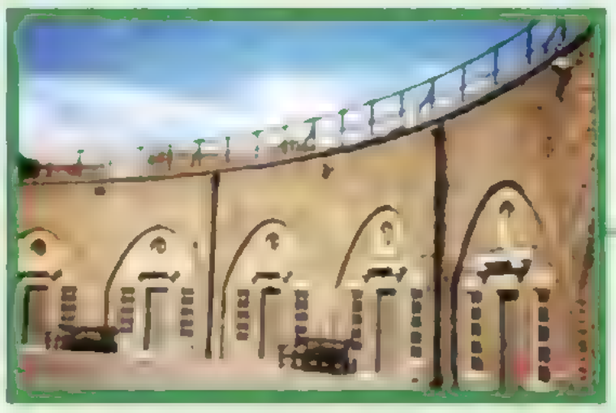
Redoubt Fortress & Military museum

One of the south coast's most historic landmarks, discover over 200 years of history at this Napoleonic fortress. Built to defend the south coast from Napoleon's forces, it still stands as a unique monument to that time and now houses the largest military collection of its kind in the south of England.

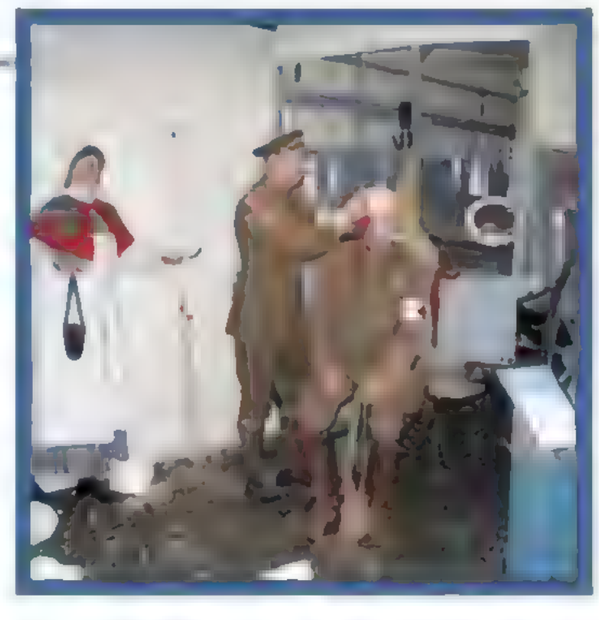
The Redoubt's latest exhibition, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Button Maker*, features military uniforms from 19th Century onwards, and focuses on the people that carefully crafted these magnificent examples of tailoring.

The fortress has an exciting programme of events for 2013, including military history lectures, film screenings, swing dances, and noonday cannon firing during the summer holidays. The Outpost café serves a delicious selection of pastries, cakes, and excellent coffee.

Entry to the parade ground and battlements is free, with admission charged only inside the fortress and military exhibition. You also get a free return visit with each ticket!



WHERE: Redoubt Fortress & Military Museum, Royal Parade, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 7AQ
OPENING TIMES: Open 7 days a week 9am – 5pm
CONTACT: 01323 410300
redoubtmuseum@eastbourne.gov.uk
www.eastbournemuseums.co.uk



Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo Museum

The museum is located in the fortifications that were built in 1874 to reinforce France's costal defence. Bastion 32 served as the headquarters for the French and Allied forces during the Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo. The *Memorial Du Souvenir* tells an incredible story of the battle and the evacuation of more than 338,000 allied soldiers from the pocket of Dunkirk.

The museum boasts a rich exhibition of maps and pictures, as well as both Allied and German military materiel. Scale models of the sites and of the operation, uniforms, and weapons complete the impressive collection.

Visiting the museum will also offer you the opportunity to see a 15-minute-long film using dramatic period footage. This film gives visitors an exciting overall view of the events which took place between May and June 1940.

WHERE: Courtines du Bastion 32, Rue des Chantiers de France, 59140 Dunkerque, A16 exit 60.
OPENING TIMES: 1 April - 30 September, 10am-12pm, 2pm-5pm
CONTACT: +33 (0)3 28262731
production@ot-dunkerque.fr
www.dynamo-dunkerque.com

Army Medical Services Museum

The AMS Museum tells the story of how the British Army has affected the history of medicine and health care since the English Civil Wars. It does this through the use of life-sized dioramas and displays featuring medical equipment, uniforms, badges and medals, and personal artefacts.

It houses an extensive archive and library featuring many important papers concerning the history of military medicine, nursing, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. There is also a display of 23 Victoria Crosses including a VC and Bar awarded to a military doctor.

WHERE: Keogh Barracks, Ash Vale, Aldershot GU12 5RQ
OPENING TIMES: 9am-3.30pm (Mon - Fri)
CONTACT: 01252 868612
armymedicalmuseum@btinternet.com
www.ams-museum.org.uk

WAR GAMES V&A Museum of Childhood

War Games, is an exhibition exploring the role of warfare in children's play from 1800 to the present day. Showcasing over 100 objects from the museum's collection, as well as important loans, it examines the effect of war and conflict on toys and games through four sections. Playing at War raises the topic of children re-enacting war through a display of historic dressing-up clothes, a range of toy weapons, and strategy games. On the Battlefield provides a chronological overview of combat, exploring how toys have imitated the changing technology of weaponry, new geographies of war zones, and the creation of new armies. Exhibits such as a 1920s German trench and soldier set and a 2010 World Peacekeepers Black Hawk helicopter demonstrate the close relationship of toys and contemporary warfare. Reality to Fantasy looks at the change that came in the aftermath of the World Wars. The final section, Secret Weapons, reveals the use of toys in warfare – to train and influence, to comfort and heal, and to aid escape. It questions the role of war toys as tools of propaganda or patriotism, with games like the 1914 British puzzle Get Rid of the Huns.

V&A Museum of Childhood houses the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection of childhood-related objects and artefacts, spanning the 1600s to the present day.

WHERE: V&A Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9PA
OPENING TIMES: 10am-5.45pm
CONTACT: 020 8983 5200
www.museumofchildhood.org.uk/wargames

MUSEUM GUIDE

All images: Airborne Assault Museum, Duxford; WIPL; Medmenham Trust

Birth of the Red Devils

THE BRUNEVAL RAID, 27-28 FEBRUARY 1942

Taylor Downing, whose new book is just out, takes us to the heart of the action in the first successful British Paratroop raid of World War II.

Above A motor gunboat at Portsmouth with Royal Navy crew and Paras of C Company, Parachute Brigade, the men who carried out the Bruneval Raid. Major John Frost, commander of the operation, is the figure on the bridge wearing paratroop helmet.

He was the fifth to jump. It was a hazardous business jumping from a Whitley, the pre-war bomber the RAF had adapted for dropping Paras. You slid yourself along the floor, got over the hole that had been made in the base of the fuselage, and threw yourself out. If you misjudged it, you smashed your face on the casing at the side of the hole – the 'Whitley Kiss' it was called.

But that night it all went smoothly for John Frost. The stick of ten men jumped into the cold night air. After a quick descent, about ten seconds, Frost landed perfectly in the snow.

They had only been told about snow in northern France as they boarded the aircraft at Thruxton airfield. He worried that they should have brought their white smocks. But it was too late. The Paras were on the ground in occupied France, half a mile from their target on a bright moonlit night. They had plenty of other things to worry about now.

C Company

Major John Frost was in the Cameronians before volunteering for the Parachute Brigade. He thought it was the best way to get some action. Weeks of training followed, and as Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion he had to forge a new unit out of volunteers from every regiment in the British Army.

But now he was in command of C Company. It consisted of men exclusively from the Scottish regiments, some of the toughest units in the Army. He was English, as were most of the officers, but the men were a hard lot, from mining and crofting families across the cities and the Highlands of Scotland. That is why it was known as Jock Company.

Above British Paras line up for embarkation on 27 February 1942.

It was a great privilege for C Company to be chosen for the first combat operation of the new Parachute Brigade. The only other time British Paratroopers had been in action was a year before in southern Italy. That had been a disaster. The mission to blow up an aqueduct had failed. Even worse was that all the men had been captured. No-one had got back. It was humiliating.

Since then, the Parachute forces had been reorganised, largely on the insistence of the Prime Minister. Winston Churchill wanted an élite force able to strike anywhere at the enemy. So there was now an Airborne Division with parachutists and glider troops training up. General 'Boy' Browning was its commander. And the Airborne was part of Combined Operations under Lord Mountbatten, another inspiring leader. He had been up to Loch Fyne to visit C Company in their training for this mission. He made a speech and told them how important their task was. The full details became clear later.

The mission

They were to capture and bring back to England a unique piece of German radar apparatus. The boffins needed to examine it to work out how the German radar shield over Europe worked. They were told that the lives of thousands of British airmen could be saved if they captured this piece of radar.

So the Paras were going into action for the first time under their new command. It was named 'Operation Biting', and their task was to overwhelm the enemy defences at the radar station on the cliffs, dismantle the equipment, cart it down the cliffs, and carry it off on landing-craft that would come in at just the right minute to take the men off the beaches. The location was about 12 miles along the coast from Le Havre, near a small village called Bruneval.

> If you misjudged the jump, you smashed your face on the casing at the side of the hole – the 'Whitley Kiss' it was called.

Having assembled after the jump, the Paras moved off, silently and stealthily, across the fields towards the radar station on top of the cliffs. The photo-intelligence people at RAF Medmenham had provided them with a detailed analysis of the site, and explained where the main German defences were located. They had produced terrain models which every man in the operation had studied. As he moved off with his men, Frost reflected that rarely had a raiding party known so much about their objective. They even knew the name of the sergeant in charge of the Wehrmacht platoon guarding the beach.

Firefight

Thirty minutes after landing, Frost and his men were in position, some surrounding the old seaside villa that they assumed was the radar HQ, and others around the Würzburg installation. He was just about to kick the door of the villa open when he realised he had forgotten to blow his whistle. He gave it ▷

MAJOR JOHN FROST

Bruneval was the first battle honour of the new Parachute Brigade. John Frost won an MC for leading the operation (along with Lieutenant Charteris). Frost was summoned to the underground Cabinet War Rooms, where he personally briefed Churchill and the War Cabinet on the raid. He later went on to lead Paras in action in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

His finest hour came in September 1944, when he lead 2 Para in capturing the road bridge at Arnhem during Operation Market Garden. Frost and his men held on to the bridge for several days in bitter house-to-house fighting, but he was eventually wounded and taken prisoner. In 1977, after the movie *A Bridge Too Far* had come out, the Dutch renamed the bridge over the Lower Rhine at Arnhem the John Frost Bridge.

Left Major John Frost, commander of C Company, Parachute Brigade.

They found one German at an upstairs window. He did not stand a chance.

Photo: Medmenham Trust

Above A British reconnaissance aircraft took this photograph of the Bruneval radar installation beside a commandeered villa on 5 December 1941. Analysed at RAF Medmenham, the top-secret photo intelligence centre, it was the basis of operational planning for the raid.

one sharp blast. That was the signal to start the raid.

Frost and six men charged into the villa. Throwing grenades and shouting '*Hände hoche*' they went from room to room. They found one German at an upstairs window. He did not stand a chance. Otherwise, to their surprise, the villa was empty.

Frost could hear a firefight taking place around the Würzburg radar, a hundred yards away. With the villa secure, he moved across to the Würzburg, and as he arrived the shooting ceased. Lieutenant Peter Young was in charge of the group that had seized the radar. He told Frost that several defenders had been shot.

As Frost arrived, the Paras were hauling a German up from the edge of the cliff where he was hiding. Through a translator, a German Jew they had brought with them, Frost learned that this man worked on the radar. Their orders were to take no prisoners other than radar operators. The man could be a useful addition to the night's work. Frost ordered the prisoner to be kept under guard. So far, Operation Biting was going wonderfully well. They had achieved complete surprise and had taken the radar installation, without sustaining a single casualty.

Radar

Within a few minutes, a team of Para Royal Engineers arrived at the Würzburg. They had had special training in how to dismantle delicate electronic equipment. With them was another volunteer, RAF Sergeant Charles Cox. He was an experienced radar man who had agreed to come on the Para mission. They needed someone who understood radar. He quickly took in the details.

The Würzburg consisted of a rotating parabolic bowl, about ten feet in diameter. Behind this was the control unit in a steel cabin about four feet high

GERMAN RADAR

The prevailing view among British scientists at the start of the war was that the Germans did not have radar. Radio Direction Finding, as it was then known, had been developed by an ingenious group of British scientists working along the Suffolk coast from 1935. The Chain Home Radar system they developed earned its spurs in the Battle of Britain, helping to guide the RAF fighters to the Luftwaffe bombers. By late 1940, however, it was clear that not only did the Germans have radar, but that they had developed several highly sophisticated forms of it.

German naval radar operated on a wavelength of 80cm. The Luftwaffe had one system called Freya operating on a 2m wavelength. But the key piece of technology was called Würzburg, and seemed to work at 53cm. It was built by Telefunken, the German electronics giant. But it was not clear to the British scientists at the Air Ministry how it operated.

If a Würzburg could be captured intact and brought back, then it could be examined. Not only could the scientists find out how it worked, but maybe they could find out how to jam it as well. The breakthrough came in December 1941, when what was thought to be a Würzburg radar station was spotted on aerial photographs at the top of 350-foot cliffs at Bruneval.

Above The Würzburg radar. The purpose of the Bruneval Raid was to secure examples of key components of the German radar system so that British scientists could establish how it worked and devise counter-measures.

Above A German prisoner from the raid is handed back to the military. **Above right** An assault landing craft brings back the Bruneval Raiders.

and three feet wide. The senior engineer, Lieutenant Dennis Vernon, had a Leica camera. He started to photograph the radar using a flash. But as he did so he lit up the scene and the first German guns opened up on the Paras.

It was small-arms fire coming from Luftwaffe guards in a farm a few hundred yards away called Le Presbytère. They had been warned to expect resistance from here. The fire grew heavier. The Würzburg would soon become an unhealthy place to be.

Meanwhile, things were not going so well for some of the other Paras dropped that night. Lieutenant Euan Charteris, at only 20, was the youngest officer in C Company. He and a force of 20 men had the task of seizing the German stronghold on the beach, the villa Stella Maris, to secure the exit route from which all the Paras would depart once the mission was accomplished. But he had been dropped into the wrong valley. He was about two miles south of the rest of the raiding party. He ordered his men to move off towards Bruneval at the double. But they were on unfamiliar ground and the going was slow.

Lost squad

The Germans by now were well aware that a raid was taking place. An alert sentry had reported that he had seen parachutists in the night sky. Patrols had been sent out to investigate, and all the posts in the neighbourhood had been put on full alert.

What the local commander, Oberleutnant Huhn, could not work out was how many raiders there were in the vicinity and what their objective was. There was a big station of Freya radars to the north. Huhn assumed this must be the target. He telephoned his senior officers and reported that Bruneval was under attack.

As luck would have it, Lieutenant Charteris and his squad moving quickly north passed very near to a German patrol. In the woods at night it was easy to get confused. The Paras were suddenly aware of another man running behind them. Sergeant Gibbon turned to see who it was, and as he did so the man cried out – in German!

Somehow, an enemy soldier had got tangled up with the Paras. According to legend, one of the Paras took out a knife and silently slit the throat of ▷

Below A contemporary plan of the Bruneval Raid showing landings, movements, buried cable (---), barbed wire (xxx), machine-gun posts (MG), pill-boxes (P), the radar installation (RDF), and the villa ('isolated house').

Above At Loch Fyne, Paras and RN crews train for evacuation before the raid.

BRITISH LOSSES

Two Paras were killed at Bruneval. They are buried in the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in Le Havre. In the chaotic withdrawal from the beach, the Paras left behind six men who had missed the call to embark on the landing craft. One of them was badly wounded and surrendered the following morning. Three of them were captured by a Luftwaffe patrol. The two others spent ten days eluding the German search parties. They made contact with the French underground in Le Havre, who tried to smuggle them to safety. They were eventually captured at the border. The French couple helping them were also arrested and sent to concentration camps. The six prisoners ended up in Stalag VIIIB, a huge PoW camp near Lamsdorf in Poland. They all survived the war. Sergeant-Major Strachan later returned to the Paras, but never fully recovered from his stomach wounds and died in 1948, aged 41.

the intruder. The truth was a bit more prosaic. Sergeant Gibbon raised his Sten-gun and fired a burst of bullets. The German dropped immediately. But the firing had given the Paras away. The Germans now knew that enemy soldiers were in the woods just south of Bruneval.

Crowbars and cables

Back at the Würzburg, all was not well. The firing from Le Presbytère was growing more intense. The first Para killed that night was hit by this gunfire. And Vernon and Cox were struggling. Trying to dismantle the Würzburg, they found the cabinet was very strong. They used axes, hammers, and spanners to try to force it open. But it would not budge.

By now under heavy fire, the Paras around the Würzburg were getting impatient. They shouted at the engineers to speed up. Finally, with two men levering a large crowbar, the door of the cabinet swung open. Inside were all the different component parts of the radar system they had come for. Vernon and Cox started to pull at them. Cables, wires, and bits of electrical equipment came tumbling out.

Speed and surprise were vital to Operating Biting. The Germans had plenty of troops within a few miles. There were armoured cars nearby, and 20 miles away were Panzers. The Paras had nothing but rifles and Sten-guns. They had to get in, grab their booty, and get out quickly. If they stuck around too long they would be sitting ducks. All they could do would be to hold out until their ammunition ran out and then surrender to spend the rest of the war in a PoW camp. Frost knew this. Everyone instinctively realised it.

So Frost took a crucial decision. They could not wait much longer on the exposed cliff-top by the radar installation under intense fire. He told Vernon and Cox to grab what they could, put it on the trolleys they had brought, and then to move out as quickly as possible. He could hear there was still gunfire down near the beach. So Frost gave the order to move to the edge of the cliffs to assess what was happening below.

Cliff-top and beach

Frost's deputy, Captain John Ross, was engaged in the firefight at the beach. The Germans based at the villa Stella Maris were linked to a network of pill-boxes and machine-gun positions. Because Charteris and his squad were missing, Ross did not have enough men to storm the German defences. They were stubbornly holding on and firing out across the sides of the cliffs. It was at this point that disaster struck.

When Frost and his group got to the edge of the cliff-top, they were temporarily silhouetted; a German machine-gunner spotted them and opened fire. Sergeant-Major Gerry Strachan, a stalwart of C Company, was hit in the stomach and went down in agony. The rest of the Paras immediately dropped to the ground. Cox felt a bullet skim his boots. Fortunately, he was not hit.

The situation had turned right around. Ross did not have control of the beach which was essential for their escape. Frost and his men were under fire on the side of the cliff. Charteris with his squad were missing. And the Germans seemed to be rallying quickly.

At the blackest moment, Charteris and his men arrived up the inland road to join Ross near the beach. After barely drawing breath, Charteris launched an immediate attack on the Stella Maris. One of his men from the Seaforth Highlanders screamed their ancient war cry of '*Caber Feidh*'. It warmed the heart

Sergeant-Major Gerry Strachan, a stalwart of C Company, was hit in the stomach and went down in agony.

THE GERMAN VERDICT

A few days after the Bruneval Raid, the Germans wrote a report on the events of that night. The Paras claimed they had killed 40 Germans. In reality, the Germans lost only five men killed and three captured. The Germans were still puzzled by the reason for the raid, and assumed that it was only the steadfast defence by their soldiers that had prevented the British from seizing the Freya radar to the north. This had never been an objective. However, the official German report was fulsome in its praise of the British Paras. It concluded the attack 'was well planned and was executed with great daring', and that the Paras had concentrated entirely on their 'primary task' and had displayed 'exemplary discipline under fire'. The legend of the Red Devils was born.

Above German prisoners taken in the raid are searched after arrival at Portsmouth.

of every Scotsman present.

The extra Paras made all the difference. In a few minutes the Stella Maris was captured, two more prisoners were taken, and the rest of the Germans had fled into the woods. At last the beach was secure. Ross told Frost to come on down the cliffs. Heaving all the radar apparatus, Frost, the badly wounded Strachan, the German radar prisoner, and the rest of the Paras struggled down the cliff path.

Stranded

But there was a new problem. The Royal Navy was nowhere to be seen. The radios the Paras had been issued with to contact the Navy did not seem to be working. They could not get through to tell the flotilla of waiting landing-craft to come in to the beach. The Paras tried flashing torches. Nothing. Out at sea, the naval officers were equally puzzled. Was the fighting still taking place? Or had all the Paras been captured or shot? They knew they could not wait much longer or they risked being spotted at dawn off the enemy coast.

Frost was in despair. They had come this far, were waiting on the beach with their precious cargo of radar apparatus, but they could not make contact with the Navy. He called his officers together. He decided there was no alternative but to construct a perimeter defensive line and to hold off the inevitable counter-attack for as long as possible.

They were just about to head off into the darkness when a man shouted out, 'Sir, the boats are coming in! God bless the ruddy Navy!' Frost looked out and saw the dark shapes of six landing-craft approaching the beach. A naval officer had spotted one of their flares and decided to risk it. They arrived in the nick of time.

Evacuation

The embarkation was nothing to be proud of. The Germans opened fire from the top of the cliffs overlooking the beach. Each landing-craft held six soldiers armed with Bren-guns who fired back. In the din, naval officers shouted orders through megaphones.

Frost ordered the wounded and the captured radar pieces into the first landing-craft. But it got stuck on the shingle and could not pull away. A naval officer leapt into the sea and tied it to another craft that pulled it off the beach. The rest of the Paras then scrambled though the freezing water into the nearest landing-craft. At one point, one landing-craft had 60 men in it. Half of them were told to get out and find another boat. Frost was the last to leave in the final craft.

A few hundred yards out to sea, the men transferred from the landing-craft onto fast motor gun-boats. The landing-craft were put in tow, and off they headed for England, getting away from the French coast just as the dawn was coming up.

Many of the Paras were violently seasick. Some of them, enjoying generous measures of naval rum, got drunk. Later that afternoon, they arrived at Portsmouth. Photographers and a newsreel cameraman were waiting for them. BBC radio announced details of the successful raid to a nation delighted to have a good news story at last. The next day the newspapers were full of the success of the Bruneval Raid. Britain had a new fighting force to be proud of. The Paras were the new heroes. Anyone wearing Para wings who went into a pub in the next month automatically got drinks bought for him.

But no news report carried the real story of Bruneval. Everyone believed the mission had been to knock out a radar station. No-one knew that the Paras had brought back with them vital pieces of German radar. The boffins had everything they needed. They could now set about piecing together exactly how the German radar defences operated. It was a turning-point in the scientific war, and eventually resulted in a huge boost to the bombing offensive over Germany. That part of the raid was kept top secret.

Further information

Taylor Downing's latest book *Night Raid: the true story of the first victorious British Para raid of WWII* was published by Little, Brown in May.

Naval GUNPOWER

FROM THE ARMADA TO TRAFALGAR

David Porter begins a two-part history of naval gunnery with analysis of developments from 1500 to 1815.

Artillery was mounted on ships almost as soon as it first appeared in land warfare in the mid 14th century. In 1386, the chronicler Jean Froissart described a large ship 'armed with three guns that threw such large quarrels that, wherever they fell, they pierced everything and caused great damage.' The reference to 'quarrels', a term used for crossbow bolts, shows that the guns in question were firing over-sized iron 'arrows' – anti-personnel rather than anti-ship weapons.

Guns rapidly became a standard part of warships' armament. A chronicle of 1411 recommends that naval vessels should greet attacking ships 'ryght well with gode bombardes'. The bombard was a short-barrelled cannon that generally fired solid stone shot. Nonetheless, even the largest 15th-century sailing warships, such as Henry V's 2,750-ton *Grace Dieu*, carried only a handful of small cannon. Grappling and boarding was still decisive in naval tactics.

Ship-killing guns

The earliest large guns with 'ship-killing' potential seem to have been mounted in Mediterranean war-galleys from the 1480s. Initially these were large bombards, but during the 16th century they were replaced by longer-barrelled bronze guns with greater range.

At the Battle of Prevesa in 1538, an Ottoman fleet of 122 galleys under Barbarossa Hayreddin Pasha defeated Andrea Doria's Holy League fleet of 152 galleys and 'roundships' (large sailing warships akin to the *Mary Rose*). The isolated and becalmed roundships were badly battered by the guns of the Ottoman galleys. A Spanish eyewitness recalled that:

Barbarossa… began to bombard our roundships and they to reply to him. He sent to the bottom one of our ships with 300 Spanish soldiers… He destroyed another Vizcayan roundship in which were 400 Spanish soldiers.

Barbarossa proved the effectiveness of well-handled naval guns, sinking at least 13 of Doria's vessels and capturing another 36. Venetian galleys of the period, whose gunners were probably the best in the Mediterranean, were generally expected to hit an oncoming enemy galley at up to 500 yards, which was about the maximum effective range of naval gunnery until well into the 19th century.

The *Mary Rose*

The early 16th century saw a dramatic increase in the firepower of sailing warships, which were adapted to mount large-calibre cannon on purpose-built gun-decks, supplementing the lighter anti-personnel weapons carried in the towering stern- and forecastles of the period. The *Mary Rose* was an exemplar of this new class of ship.

Completed in 1512 as a typical 'great ship' of the era, it mounted a few heavy, bronze, muzzle-loading cannon alongside a large number of older-type, wrought-iron, breech-loading guns of various sizes.

The large iron guns were made up of staves or bars welded into cylinders and then reinforced by shrinking iron hoops. Mounted on simple gun-carriages made from hollowed-out elm logs, they had only one pair of wheels, or none at all.

The bronze guns were cast in one piece and were mounted on four-wheel 'truck' carriages that were essentially the same as those used until well into the 19th century. The large breech-loaders were cheaper to produce, and both easier and faster to reload, but were prone to bursting and had to use less powerful charges than cast bronze guns of similar size.

In general, the bronze muzzle-loaders fired cast-iron shot at relatively high velocity, and were more suited to penetrating enemy hulls, while the lower-velocity iron guns used stone shot against the flimsy stern- and forecastles, together with a variety of specialised anti-rigging and anti-personnel ammunition.

The majority of the iron guns were, in fact, small, close-range weapons, crewed by one or two men. These included breech-loading swivel guns known as 'bases' and small muzzle-loaders called 'hailshot pieces', which had rectangular bores and fin-like lugs beneath their barrels for hooking over the ship's rail to take the force of the recoil. The term 'hailshot' referred to the ammunition – dozens of small iron shot that spread on firing, creating the effect of a giant shotgun.

The armament of the *Mary Rose* changed throughout her career, most significantly during her rebuilding in 1536, when the number of anti-personnel guns was reduced and a second tier of carriage-mounted long guns fitted. When she sank in 1545, she carried a total of 91 guns, 24 of which were 'anti-ship' weapons.

> Barbarossa… began to bombard our roundships and they to reply to him. He sent to the bottom one of our ships with 300 Spanish soldiers…
>
> *Spanish eyewitness, Battle of Prevesa, 1538*

The defeat of the Spanish Armada

Despite her impressive array of guns, the *Mary Rose* was still designed to close with enemy vessels and subject them to a short-range bombardment before unleashing boarding parties headed by her complement of almost 200 soldiers. This remained the basis of naval tactics until the late 16th century, when the development of more manoeuvrable 'race-built' galleons by English shipwrights encouraged increasing reliance on the firepower of muzzle-loading bronze cannon.

The Armada campaign of 1588 marked the first large-scale attempt to pit firepower against a fleet equipped for traditional 'close and board' tactics. Although English gunnery inflicted heavy casualties on the Spanish crews, the clashes in the Channel that year revealed that naval firepower could not yet be concentrated sufficiently to destroy a major fleet as an effective fighting force.

William Thomas, an English master-gunner, wrote despondently of the action off Gravelines: 'So much powder and shot spent, and so long time in fight, and in comparison thereof so little harm.'

Thomas was unduly pessimistic, for English gunfire had sunk the 665-ton *La Maria Juan*, while the galleons *San Felipe* and *San Mateo* were so badly damaged that they ran aground and were captured by the Dutch. Neither Thomas, nor anyone else in the English fleet, could know that the battering they had inflicted on the Armada would prove fatal for so many of its vessels as they battled the storms which hit them during their struggle to return to Spain.

Bomb vessels

After the spurt in development during the 16th century, naval weapons technology crept forward during the following 200 years – in fact, an English gun crew of 1588 would have seen little real difference if whisked through time to man the guns of Nelson's fleet. ▷

All images: © WIPL

SAILS
1 Fore top-gallant
2 Fore topsail
3 Fore course
4 Fore bonnet
5 Spritsail
6 Main topsail
7 Main course
8 Main bonnet
9 Mizzen

MASTS
10 Fore
11 Main
12 Mizzen

HULL
13 Figurehead
14 Beak
15 Bowsprit
16 Forecastle
17 Cathead
18 Anchor
19 Upper gun-deck
20 Lower gun-deck
21 Orlop deck
22 Keel
23 Rudder
24 Quarter galley
25 Half (or quarter) deck
26 Stern lantern

HALF-DECK
27 Lockers
28 Master (shown giving instructions)
29 Great skylight
30 Officers
31 Demi-falcon (small gun)

UPPER GUN-DECK
32 Officers' cabins
33 Helmsmen
34 Whipstaff (for steering)
35 Main staircase (from half-deck)
36 Great cabin
37 Main capstan
38 Guns
39 Break in deck
40 Night's head
41 Boats stowed
42 Great hatch
43 Jeer capstan
44 Members of ship's crew
45 Galley flue-pipe
46 Officers' stores

ARTILLERY AT SEA

Naturally, there were some innovations. The need for more effective shore bombardment, for example, led to the development of the mortar-armed bomb vessel in the late 17th century. These were based on the designs of Bernard Renau d'Eliçagaray, and were first used by the French Navy. They were known initially as *gáliotes à bombe* (a term derived from the Dutch *galliot* – a short, beamy vessel well-suited to absorbing the mortars' powerful downwards recoil). Five such vessels shelled Algiers in 1682, destroying the harbour's forts and killing 700 defenders. Two years later, the French repeated their success at Genoa.

These early French bomb vessels had two forward-pointing mortars fixed side-by-side on the foredeck. The mortars of the period were almost unique in firing explosive shells rather than solid shot. At this time, shells were little more than gunpowder-filled hollow cannon balls fitted with simple wooden time fuses containing finely ground gunpowder.

Flintlocks

Until well into the 18th century all naval guns were fired by applying a linstock – a wooden staff holding a length of smouldering match at the end – to the touch-hole of the gun, which was filled with loose, finely ground priming powder. Accurate sighting was impossible at anything other than point-blank range, as the gun-captain had to stand to one side to fire so as to keep clear of the gun's recoil. It was a dangerous and uncertain business, with frequent misfires and spilt powder posing a significant fire hazard. Its gradual replacement from the mid 18th century by the gunlock, a modification of the flintlock mechanism of contemporary pistols and muskets, was a vast improvement.

The gunlock was operated by pulling a long cord, or lanyard. The gun-captain could now stand behind the gun, safely beyond its maximum recoil, and sight along ▷

LOWER GUN-DECK

47 Tiller
48 Gunners' store
49 Break in deck
50 Crew's space
51 Lower main capstan
52 Members of crew asleep on deck
53 Ladder to upper gun-deck
54 Great hatch opening
55 Base of jeer capstan
56 Galley

ORLOP DECK

57 Lazaretto
58 Beer store
59 Magazine
60 Protected magazine lantern
61 Young crew carrying powder to guns
62 Cables, spare spars etc
63 Hatch covers
64 Crew's space

HOLD

65 Flour
66 Fresh water in barrels
67 Diagonal bracing
68 General stores
69 Ribs and main timbers
70 Cross (or athwartship) timbers
71 Ballast
72 Outer planking
73 Water-line

the gun, improving accuracy at medium and long range. Loading the gun was faster and safer, as loose priming powder was superseded by a quill, filled with priming powder, that was pushed through the touch-hole during loading and pierced the flannel cartridge containing the main charge of gunpowder.

'Smashers'

In 1774, General Robert Melville designed a short-barrelled gun capable of firing a heavy shot. This was developed by the Carron Company into the 'carronade'. The company was able to manufacture barrels to far more precise tolerances than other foundries, allowing them to greatly reduce 'windage' – the gap between shot and bore.

Carronades were significantly smaller and lighter than equivalent conventional cannon, allowing them to be mounted on the forecastle and quarterdeck of frigates and ships-of-the-line, increasing firepower without affecting the ship's sailing qualities. The type became known as the 'Smasher', and was devastating at short range.

Oddly, the French were slow to copy the carronade – from the 1780s until well into the Napoleonic Wars their nearest equivalent was the *Obusier de vaisseau* (ship's howitzer), which was designed to fire explosive shells. Although these were highly effective in trials, they proved to be disappointing in action, and careless ammunition-handling caused so many serious accidents that the type was withdrawn from service in 1805.

Trafalgar

By the time of the Napoleonic Wars, there were fundamental differences between the British, French, and Spanish methods of naval gunnery. In general, the French and Spanish attempted to immobilise their opponents by firing on the upward roll to destroy masts and rigging, while British gun-crews were trained to fire into the hulls of enemy vessels on the downward roll.

These fundamental differences were well illustrated at Trafalgar. As the British approached the enemy line, the French and Spanish fired into their rigging, attempting to immobilise the leading vessels. This bombardment caused damage and casualties – *Victory* lost her mizzen-topmast and foresail, together with 50 casualties – but failed to halt the advance of Nelson's fleet. The British broke into the Franco-Spanish line and subjected the enemy vessels to deadly point-blank raking fire.

Above A contemporary image showing Nelson explaining his plan to his assembled captains and a diagrammatic representation of its implementation. British tactics of 'breaking the line' were designed to make maximum use of superior gunnery by bringing it to bear heavily concentrated at point-blank range.

Victory's port fo'c'sle 68-pdr carronade was one of the first of her guns to bear as she broke through, firing a roundshot and a keg of 500 musket-balls into *Bucentaure*'s stern. Able Seaman John Brown recalled that: 'We fired five broadsides into her… [and]… knocked all her counter (stern) in.'

Following British ships repeated the process. *Bucentaure*'s captain, Jean-Jacques Magendie, reported that: 'All the rigging was cut to pieces, the masts damaged by a number of shot, the guns on the upper decks dismounted. I was wounded by a splinter… the admiral [Villeneuve] ordered the few men remaining on the upper decks – they were now useless, having no guns left and no rigging to work, all being cut to pieces – to go below to the 24-pdr gun-deck.

'The enemy ships appeared to leeward of us. They were followed by the rest of the line… two 74s were on our beam, very close to windward, into whom we fired as vigorously as possible; the main and mizzen masts fell, shot through, and masked the starboard side; the colours were secured to the stump of the mainmast; the 24-pdr battery was totally dismounted and the 36-pounder battery

Above The French ship *Redoubtable*, dead in the water and about to hoist her colours, having been reduced to a floating wreck of fallen sails, splintered woodwork, and human gore by close-range British gunnery.

had lost very many men; all the hands still able to serve were sent there; worked to clear away the masts from the ship to make use of the 36-pdr battery…

'The ship, having only the foremast standing, fell away and broke her jib-boom against the *Santissima Trinidad*, they being very close together… an instant later our foremast fell… Our rigging [was] completely destroyed, totally dismasted, having lost all our men in the upper works. The 24-pdr battery [was] entirely dismounted and abandoned… The starboard side [was] masked by the masts…

'Unable to defend ourselves, having nearly 450 men killed and wounded; not being supported by any ship… not even having a boat in which [the admiral] might put off [to shift his flag], all of them having been riddled with shot, as well as the one which we had kept covered before the battle, we were cut off in the midst of five enemy ships which were pouring a very hot fire into us.

'I went on deck again at the moment when Admiral Villeneuve was constrained to strike [surrender], to prevent the further slaughter of brave men without the power of retaliating, which was done after three and a quarter hours of the most furious action, nearly always at pistol range. The relics of the eagle were thrown into the sea, as were all the signals.'

> Her beams were covered with blood, brains, and pieces of flesh, and the after parts of her decks with wounded; some without legs and some without an arm.
>
> *British midshipmen, Battle of Trafalgar, 1805*

British gunnery

The well-drilled British gun-crews could maintain a rate of fire of one round every 90 seconds, far faster than their French and Spanish counterparts. This rapidly produced hellish conditions on the lower gun-decks – a gunner on HMS *Belleisle* remembered how: 'At any moment the smoke accumulated more and more thickly, stagnating on board between decks at times so densely as to blur out the nearest objects and often blot out the men at the guns from those close at hand on each side.

'The guns had to be trained, as it were mechanically, by means of orders passed down from above, and on objects that the men fighting the guns hardly ever got a glimpse of… the men were as much in the dark as if they had been blindfolded… every man was so isolated from his neighbour that he was not put in mind of his danger by seeing his messmates go down all round. All that he knew was that he heard the crash of the shot smashing through the rending timbers, and then followed at once the hoarse bellowings of the captains of the guns calling out to the survivors "Close up there! Close up!"'

The effects of such point-blank fire were magnified by the British practice of reducing the charge as the range closed. Frequently combined with loading the guns with two or even three shot each, this greatly reduced muzzle velocity, so that the shot would ricochet around the enemy's decks after penetration, rather than passing straight through their hulls. Although solid shot could inflict horrendous casualties, the clouds of razor-sharp splinters produced by each hit were the greatest killers.

Nelson's greatest victory

Nelson had brilliantly succeeded in achieving overwhelming local superiority at the selected breakthrough points, subjecting the Franco-Spanish ships to incredible punishment – the giant 140-gun *Santissima Trinidad* surrendered after losing over 300 of her 1,050-strong crew. Midshipman William Badcock of HMS *Neptune* boarded her after her surrender and found: 'her beams… covered with blood, brains, and pieces of flesh, and the after parts of her decks with wounded; some without legs and some without an arm.'

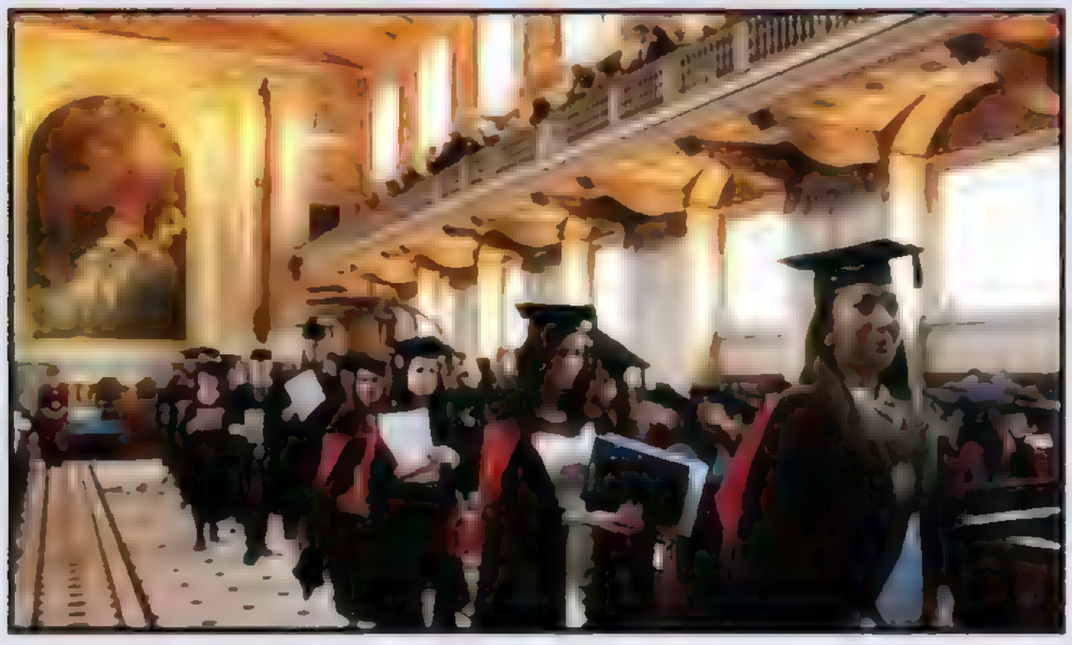
Bucentaure had been equally badly battered – Captain James Atcherley, Royal Marines, saw 'the dead, thrown back as they fell, among the middle of the deck in heaps… shot passing through these had fearfully mangled the bodies. More than 400 had been killed and wounded, of whom an extraordinary proportion had lost their heads. A raking shot, which entered on the lower deck, had glanced along the beams and through the thickest of the people, and a French officer declared that this shot alone had killed and disabled nearly 40 men.'

Trafalgar was the last of the great fleet actions of the 300 years during which smoothbore artillery dominated naval tactics – within a century HMS *Dreadnought* would carry 12-inch guns firing 850lb shells to a maximum range of 17,990 yards. To this second revolution in naval warfare we will turn next time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Porter became an author after working for the MoD for almost 30 years. He has had nine books and numerous articles published.

Studying Military History



University of Greenwich Encompassing the World

There is nowhere more imposing or better situated to study maritime matters than the Greenwich Maritime Institute at the University of Greenwich. Based in the former Chief of Defence Staff's residence in the Old Royal Naval College, GMI offers specialised degree programmes and short courses in maritime policy, security, history, and research. GMI's MA in International Maritime Policy attracts people in the maritime industry from around the world, or those wishing to work in the industry that carries 90% of the world's trade by volume across that 70% of the planet that is covered in water. The new MSc in Maritime Security focuses on all aspects of the sea as a highway or barrier to projecting force ashore, and the burgeoning requirement for maritime security which cannot be provided by navies and coastguards alone. The MA in Maritime History, taught by leading experts in the field, explores mankind's interaction with the sea, focusing on the last three hundred years but bringing the story right up to date, including a new option to study the environmental history of Britain and the sea. The MA by Research in Maritime Studies may suit those with an already well-developed interest in some aspect of policy, security or history, requiring completion of fewer taught courses but the presentation of a more substantial dissertation. GMI also has more than a dozen research postgraduates completing full research degrees – MPhil and PhD – on aspects of the maritime world ranging from naval history to modern seafarers' rights and environmentally responsible ship disposal. GMI also runs short courses: this summer it is offering one-day courses on Maritime Crime, Maritime Genealogy, and the rising maritime giant – China. The Institute can also design and run bespoke courses as required. It also hosts international conferences and a popular series of monthly research seminars, open to the public.

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JULY 2013

OnManoeuvres

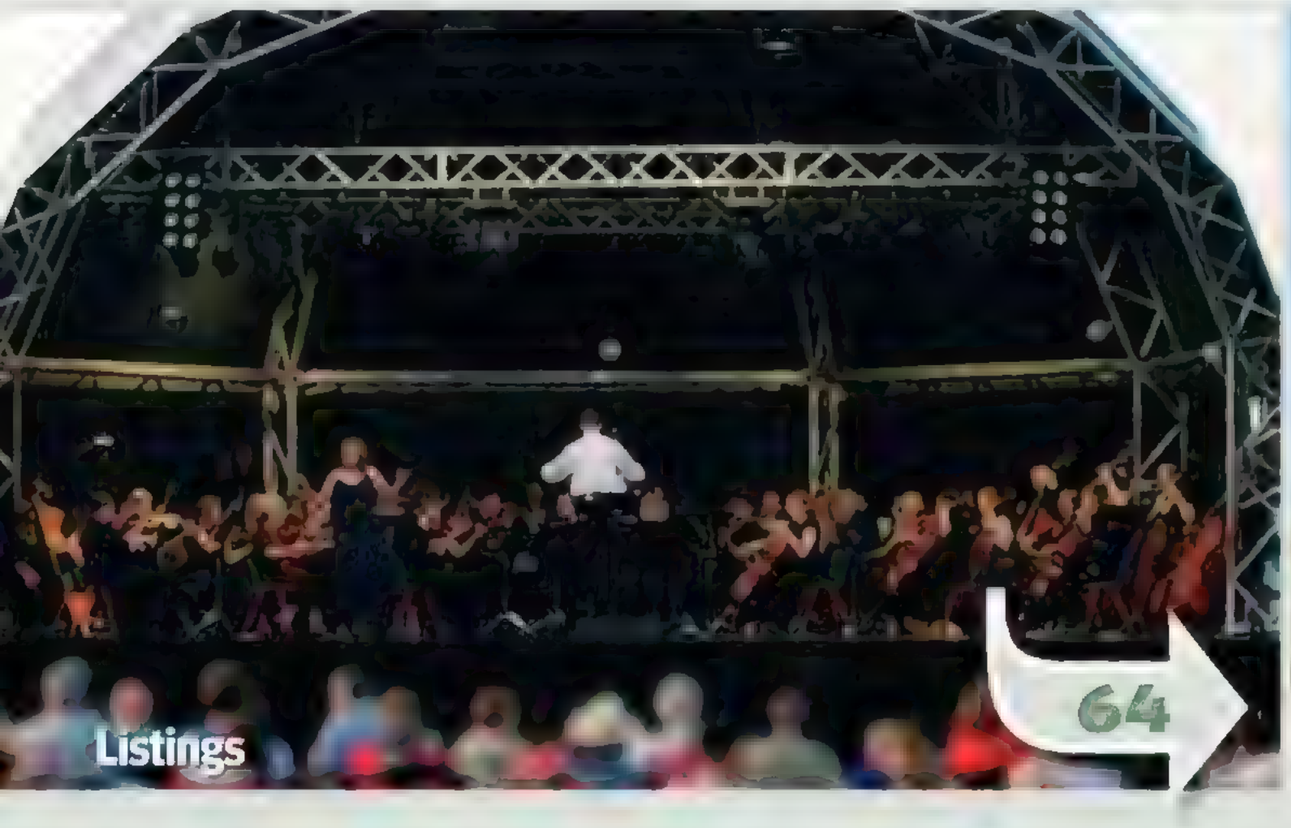
LISTINGS | MUSEUM

DATES TO REMEMBER

THIS JULY

July It's festival season, and this year there are outdoor military history events taking place all over the country. Whether you are into your military music, or if in-depth lectures are more up your street, there is something for everyone to look forward to. The Military and Flying Machines Show at Damyns Hall Aerodrome promises to be a highlight, with a wide range of vehicles, and plenty of military-themed entertainment. The IWM London partially reopens on 29 July with a major new family exhibition, 'Horrible Histories®: spies', and Newhaven Fort is putting on a living-history weekend.

John Winterburn was in Jordan this month. There he visited Sarh Al-Shaheed, the Martyrs' Memorial and Museum. He finds it to be a somewhat sanitised version of the country's history, but housed in an impressively designed building.



64 Listings

66 Museum

DATES TO REMEMBER

FAMILY EVENT

Espionage exhibition

Some new exhibitions will be available to the public when the London branch of the Imperial War Museum partially reopens on 29 July. Visitors to 'Horrible Histories®: spies' will be thrust into the world of Second World War spy-craft, encountering everything from codes that need cracking and great gadgets to savage sabotage and clever camouflage. The exhibition will also contain objects from the IWM's unique Second World War collections. Families can learn about the techniques used by the most cunning spies, including how to make 'invisible ink' and use 'fake feet', and visitors are invited to set out on their own mission with an interactive 'stamper trail'.

Horrible Histories: spies
29 July 2013-4 January 2015

IWM London
Lambeth Road
London SE1 6HZ

£6.20 ENTRY

020 7416 5000
www.iwm.org.uk

EVENT

Walking with the past

A unique opportunity to experience Britain's military history while enjoying a great family day out. Witness battles re-enacted in meticulous detail; walk among 'British Tommies', 'GI Joes' from the Normandy Beaches, and the Women's Land Army; and see many other military history groups demonstrate what it was like to serve in the First World War, the 1940s, and post-war conflicts. Some of the largest and rarest military vehicles will be on static and moving display.

The Yorkshire Wartime Experience
5-7 July 2013

Hunsworth Lane
Bradford, BD4 6RN

£6.50 ENTRY

07872 578081
www.ywe-event.info

LIVING HISTORY

£6 TICKET

LECTURE

Analysing the attack

Colonel Benest was present at Goose Green with the 2 PARA in what was the biggest battle since the Korean War. The conflict has become famous for the gallantry and determination of the Parachute Regiment. In this lecture we will find out what was it like to be involved in a frontal attack on an entrenched enemy.

Colonel Benest will compare the attack on Darwin and Goose Green with the battalion's second battle on Wireless Ridge, and discuss the command styles of the three commanding officers who led the battalion.

The Battles of Darwin and Goose Green, and Wireless Ridge

£6 ENTRY

01484 531412
www.westernfrontassociation.com

EVENT

Concert on the coast

The South Coast Proms is back – and the event is bigger and better than ever before. This will be the third time that the stunning location of HMS *Excellent* on Whale Island has been opened to the public for the two-day musical extravaganza. On both nights, you will have the unique opportunity to picnic in the grounds around HMS *Excellent* while enjoying the entertainment.

The music programme is designed to suit all tastes, and culminates in a spectacular musical firework finale. There will also be an exciting aerobatic display by the Royal Navy Historical Flight prior to the main concert.

South Coast Proms
5-6 July 2013

HMS *Excellent*
Whale Island,
Portsmouth, PO2 8ER

02392 312 007
www.southcoastproms.com

FAMILY EVENT

England through the ages

Over 2,000 re-enactors and performers will bring Kelmarsh Hall in Northamptonshire to life with the sights and sounds of England through the ages. This is the flagship English Heritage event, and promises to be as exciting as ever this year. There will be thrilling set piece battles, spectacular displays of skill, and the opportunity to meet living history enthusiasts.

There will be talks with historical experts covering wide-ranging subjects, as well as a food and drink court with a traditional carvery, a spit-roast barbecue, and a real ale bar.

History Live!

BATTLEFIELD ARCHAEOLOGY

Front-line digging

Looking forward to September, the Salonika Front Archaeology Project is offering you the opportunity to participate in exciting archaeological research on this fascinating WWI site. The season will involve six days of excavation and survey work investigating the Bulgarian front-line defences on Petit Couronné, with local labour assisting with general clearance and heavy work. There will be an optional two days of guided exploration of the First World War remains in the wider landscape, as well as a full programme of talks and seminars.

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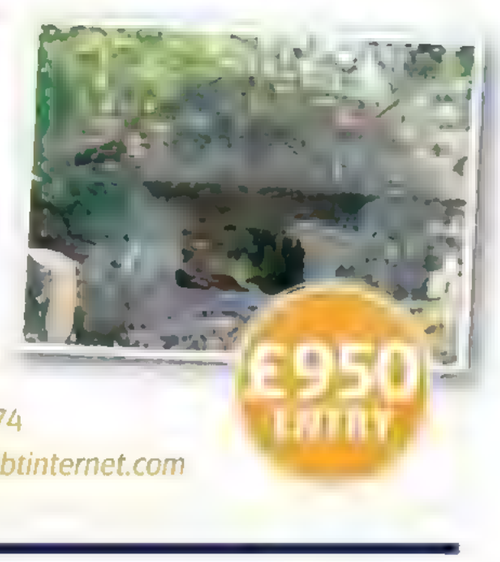

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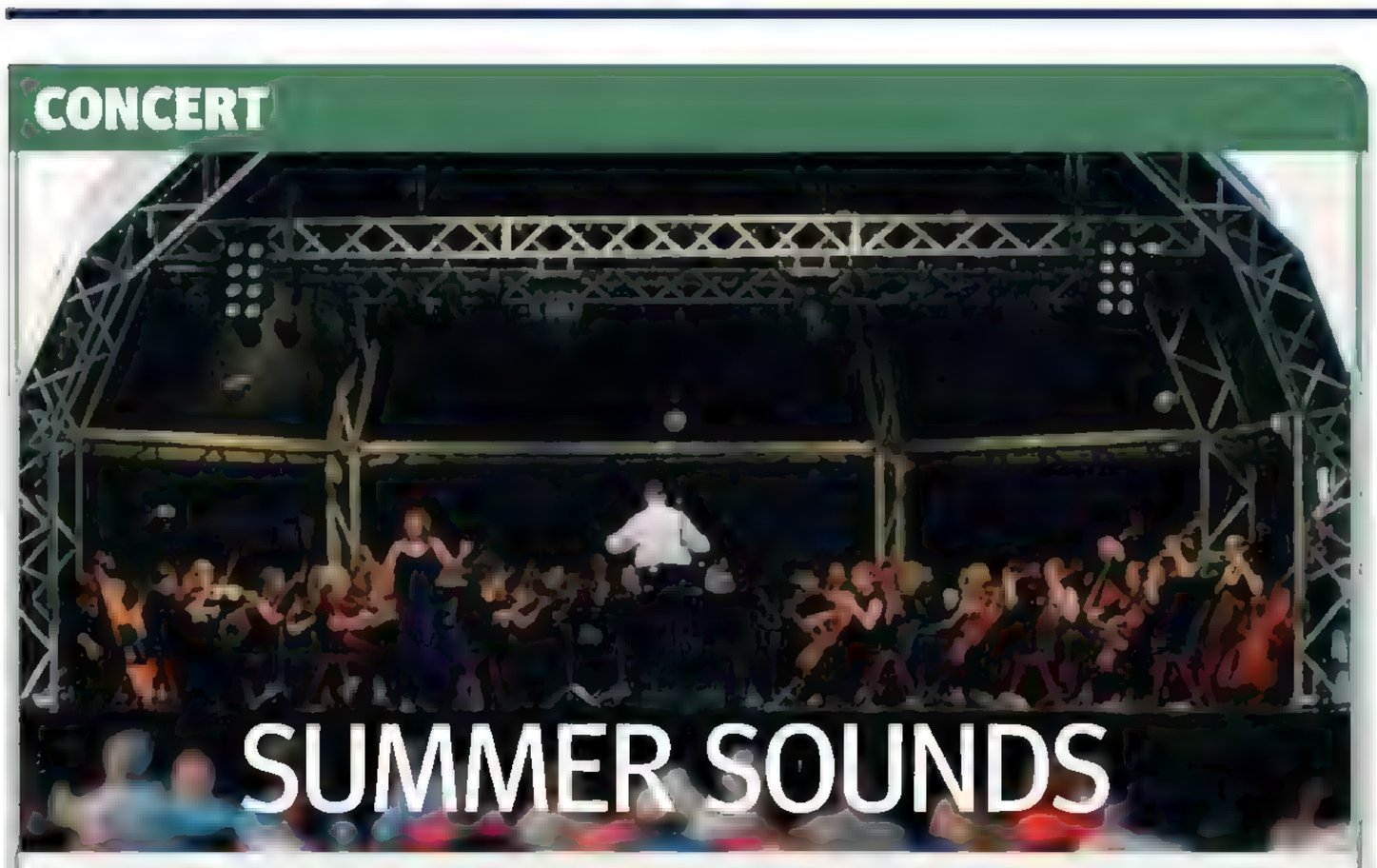
gary.rossin@btinternet.com

CONCERT



SUMMER SOUNDS

This outdoor evening event, taking place outside in the museum grounds under the wings of the Hercules, will include live performances from an orchestra, a soul band, a local military wives' choir, and an electric violinist.

In addition to the musical performances, you will be able to watch a Spitfire display from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, and a parachute display from the RAF Falcons, with a spectacular fireworks finale to conclude the event.

Bring your own picnic and refreshments to a fun-filled evening of music and spectacular displays.

EVENT

Rise of the machines

The Military and Flying Machines Show will display hundreds of vehicles. There will be classic cars, push bikes, buses, and steam engines; a flying schedule that includes a Hurricane and a B17 Flying Fortress; and a large living history section, with over 60 groups and nearly 1,000 re-enactors.

The tank parade allows you to see – and hear! – a convoy of tanks and armoured vehicles, and there will be very loud battle and firepower demonstrations. But there is also a large marquee, where you can watch performances from a 1940s big band, the Polka Dot Girls, and singer Annie Andrews. There will also be the chance to meet veterans and Chelsea pensioners.

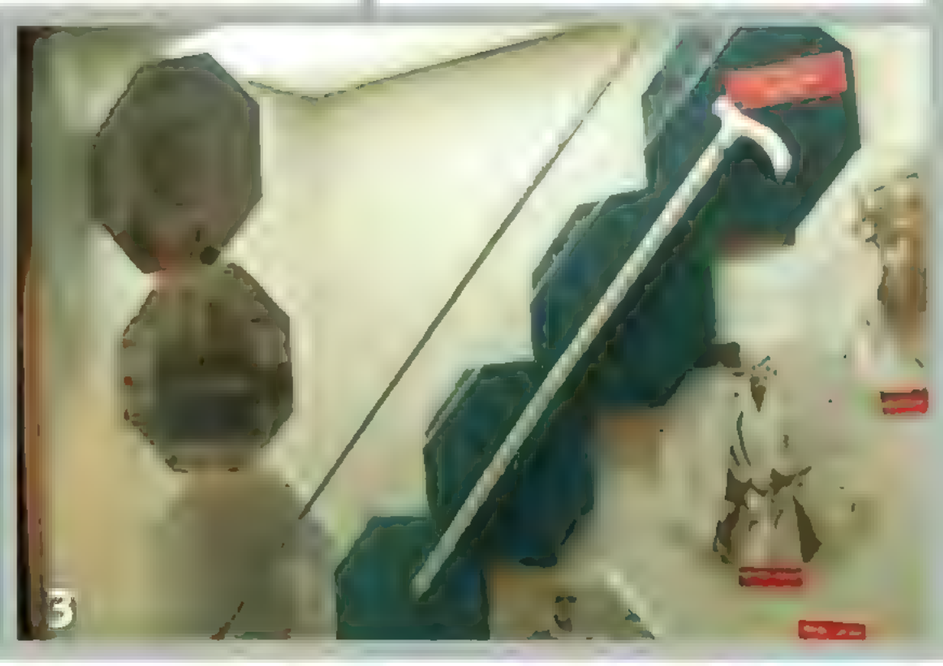
Military and Flying Machines Show
2-4 August 2013

Damyns Hall Aerodrome
Aveley Road
Essex, RM14 2TN

01245 476249
www.militaryandflyingmachines.org.uk

PICTURED ON BOTH PAGES:

1. King Hussein's military uniform
2. The Martyrs' Memorial
3. Sharif Hussein's personal effects and photographs of his three sons
4. King Abdullah with the Glubb Pasha
5. Flags of the Jordanian Army
6. Badges of rank and formation signs of the Jordanian Army
7. Long Tom Guns overlooking Amman
8. Pistols used during the Great Arab Revolt 1916-1918



Sarh Al-Shaheed, the Martyrs' Memorial and Museum

John Winterburn finds a censored version of Jordan's military history at the country's national army museum.

Sarh Al-Shaheed, the Martyrs' Memorial, sits like an acropolis on the hill overlooking the capital city, Amman. From the outside it is austere, presenting an almost featureless façade of gleaming white stone, broken only by a band of polished black basalt inscribed with gold lettering: words from the Quran on the subject of martyrs and martyrdom.

In front of the building is a large forecourt, and two Long Tom (155mm M1) field-guns are positioned pointing over the city on silent sentry duty, symbolically reinforcing the power and authority of the place, and protecting the memory of the martyrs. The possibility that these guns may have been the ones used to shell Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in Jordan's disastrous participation in the 1967 Six Day War is forgotten here, and never mentioned within the museum.

More than just a museum, the building is a memorial to those, 'The Martyrs', who gave their lives in the service of Jordan since 1915, a place where 'the nation celebrates its victories and the state displays its history' and honours the Hashemite dynasty in Jordan.

Built on the orders of the King Hussein bin Talal, the father of modern Jordan, it was designed by the Jordanian-born architect Victor Adel Bisharat and inaugurated on 25 June 1977, a date that coincided with the 25th anniversary of nation-building under the king. The design of the building means that visitors are shepherded ever-upwards, climbing to the higher levels of the museum. This carefully choreographed movement symbolises the transcendence of martyrs' spirits. The building's large interior space and external appearance are a style-reference the Ka'aba, the holiest place for Muslims, in Mecca.

The museum space within the memorial comprises three interior walls or wings, each hung with exhibits presenting the Great Arab Revolt, the foundation of the Emirate of Transjordan and the Arab Legion, and the development of Jordan's armed forces. This is history as that state wishes it to be portrayed, with victories celebrated and defeats forgotten. The Ottomans are portrayed as enemies, and five centuries of their heritage are erased from memory as Jordanian history is depicted as beginning with the Great Arab Revolt, followed by the subsequent accomplishments of the Hashemite dynasty.

To enter the building, the visitor climbs white steps from the forecourt and enters a wide doorway in the centre of the wall, gaining access to the large hall decorated with the standards of the Jordanian Army units. From here one is directed to a ramp that gently ascends along the internal

walls of the building, past the cabinets housing military artefacts associated with Jordan's history. The visitor is guided along a walkway passing displays that begin with the Great Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire, initiated by Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the great-great-grandfather of present king, Abdullah II.

Sharif Hussein's portrait is shown alongside some of his belongings, including an ivory walking stick and the silk *igal*, together with photographs of four of his sons, and images of the Ka'aba, reinforcing the Hashemite link with Mecca. There are exhibits of old weapons, including pistols and rifles used at the time of the Revolt, beside which is a cabinet of photographs of the Turkish-held fortified garrison railway station complex at Ma'an, which was attacked by Arab forces in April 1918. It was briefly taken but never held by the Arab forces during the Revolt, a fact glossed over in the display, which includes short sections of damaged railway track and explosives.

Continuing upward, you pass other historic displays and head towards more contemporary exhibits. The cabinets house curious agglomerations of Turkish uniform, British radio equipment, US-made weapons, groundsheets, signalling lamps, Turkish cavalry swords, and camel saddles, together with photographs of Glubb Pasha and the Jordanian Army in the 1950s. One particularly interesting artefact is a complete copy of the Quran printed on a single sheet of paper: another reference to the importance of the Hashemite-Islamic heritage.

As the ramp ascends further, the cabinets show badges of rank and formation signs, and the honours medals awarded to the army. Several examples of uniforms are on view, including one worn by the late King Hussein.

At the top of the building is a walled roof garden, but access is restricted by large glass panels. Itself like a large museum cabinet, this enclosed ceremonial space is for the privileged. At its centre stands a small olive tree – the tree of life and peace. Beside it sits a golden pitcher from which the King and visiting dignitaries can sprinkle water on the tree in a ritual that places the martyrs' remembrance at the heart of the country's military ceremonial. The public are able to stand and look through gold-tinted glass doors, but are not permitted to touch, walk around, or read the black panels inscribed with the names of the martyrs.

If one has a couple of hours to spare in Amman, on the way to or from the airport or Jordan's many other historic sites, then a visit to this memorial and museum will be of interest, particularly to military historians. Visiting this remarkable building can help one understand a little about the rare Middle Eastern memorialisation of conflict and the concept of 'martyrdom', as opposed to the remembrance of 'the fallen' in Western Europe's memorials.

The museum's collections are limited, and narrate a sanitised view of history; the best exhibit is the building itself and its immediate environment. Looking at its design, position, and symbolism will leave you with an understanding of the importance of the country's military and Hashemite pedigree to the modern state of Jordan.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Sarh Al-Shaheed, the Martyrs' Memorial, is located next to the Sports City Stadium, gate 4, in the Shmeisani district, 5km north-west of Al-Balad (downtown), Amman. It is open every day except Friday, from 8am to 4pm.

FREE ENTRY

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ALDERNEY

We take a look at the unique Second World War history of a beautifully remote Channel Island.

MHM explores the rich military past of the island of Alderney – and encourages you to do the same!

Alderney, third largest of the Channel Islands and the closest to France, is steeped in history, from Roman ruins to Victorian and German fortifications.

On its striking, rugged coastline lies evidence of the island's darker past – Alderney was one of the most fortified parts of the west European coastline during the Second World War.

Not long after war was declared, the civilian population of Alderney was given the opportunity to evacuate to England in 1940. Virtually the whole 1,450 population left before the first German troops seized the island.

Over the next five years, Alderney was gradually turned into a vast concrete fortress, part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall. Thirteen Victorian coastal fortifications were modified and extended to make the island into a formidable stronghold. Forced labour was used to build bunkers, gun emplacements, air-raid shelters, and concrete fortifications, much of which can still be seen today.

Alderney is unique in that it is the only part of the UK to have had a concentration camp built on it. The Germans constructed four camps on the island, each holding up to 1,500 people. At the peak of the work there were 3,000-4,000 slave workers, and 3,500 German troops and technicians on the island.

The island is also the only part of the UK to have been shelled by the Royal Navy. The navy blockaded Alderney from time to time, particularly following the liberation of Normandy in 1944.

Alderney was eventually freed by British forces, with the German garrison surrendering on 16 May 1945. More than 1,000 Germans were kept on the island to help the British troops clear up the 37,000 mines that had been laid, the miles of barbed wire, the booby traps, the rubble from buildings they had destroyed, and to repair as many houses as possible. It was December 1945 before any islanders were allowed to return. In 2005, 60 years on, Alderney designated 15 December as Homecoming Day – a public holiday to celebrate the return of the islanders after six years of exile in their own country.

Today, visitors can take a trip to the Alderney Society Museum to see evidence of the general evacuation in 1940 and the subsequent Occupation of Alderney, as well as taking a walking tour of the island to see the various fortifications still intact. Fort Grosnez, Fort Tourgis, Fort Albert, and Fort Essex are but a few of the locations dotted around the island that visitors can explore.

A short 45-minute flight from Southampton – or 15 minutes from Guernsey – will allow you to discover an island with a wealth of historical interest.

There are also plenty of activities to keep families entertained on the island, including cycling, fishing, sailing, and swimming. Alderney has a wide selection of restaurants, bistros, and takeaways to cater for all palates, and is renowned for its delicious seafood. The island also has a packed events calendar, and with many walks and stunning beaches, it's the perfect place to relax.

Further information

To find out more, visit the **website:**
www.visitalderney.com
Tel: +44 (0)1481 822811
Email: *info@visitalderney.com*

A GREAT WAR MUSEUM NEXT TO PARIS!

MUSÉE DE LA GRANDE GUERRE PAYS DE MEAUX

Built on the historic site of the first Battle of the Marne, the **Musée de la Grande Guerre du Pays de Meaux,** East of Paris, provides a fresh approach to the First World War, to discover its causes, its conduct and its consequences with regard to our world today.

An Incredible and Diverse Collection

Housing a collection unparalleled anywhere in Europe, the Musée de la Grande Guerre in Pays de Meaux offers a new vision of the First World War, through innovative scenography illustrating the great changes and upheavals in society that resulted from the conflict.

This collection is extraordinarily diverse, comprising almost 20,000 objects and 30,000 documents: armaments and artillery, items from everyday life on the front line or home front, heavy equipment, over 200 complete uniforms representing all the nations concerned as well as rich documentary and graphic arts collections.

The uniforms on display in the museum make up one of the largest collections in Europe devoted to the First World War. Individual and larger weapons and pieces of artillery make up the second category of items in the collection.

As featured in Leger Holidays 5-day First World War Battlefield Tour 'Miracle of the Marne and the Battle of Verdun'
See www.leger.co.uk
Tel: 0844 6862 440

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Sat 5 Oct	"The Greatness of Haig"	by Peter Hart
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ABTOT

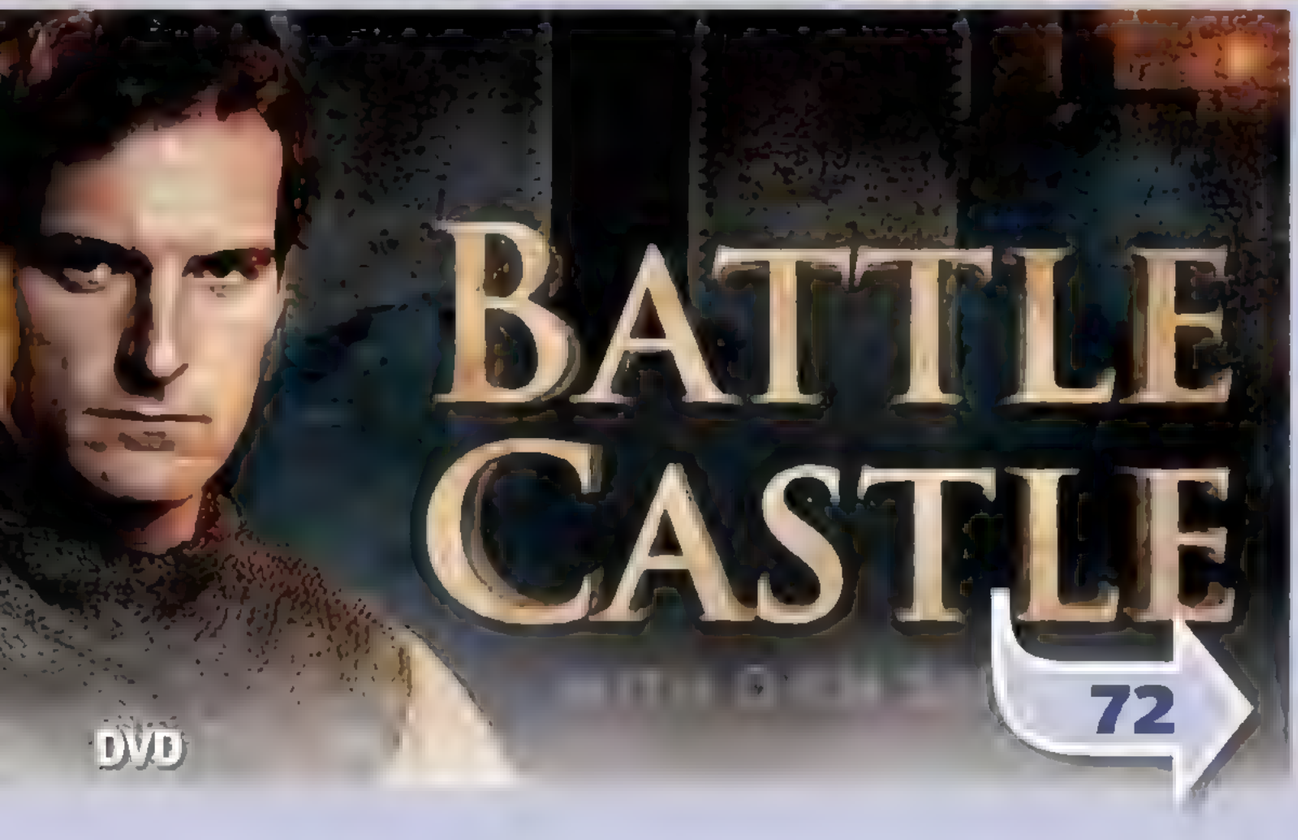
JULY 2013

MHM Reviews

DVD | BOOKS

July This month's DVD is the thrilling new documentary from the Discovery Channel, *Battle Castle with Dan Snow*. From the ramparts of Krak des Chevaliers to the murder holes of Dover, Snow attempts to discover exactly what makes a castle impregnable. This confidently presented three-disc DVD combines recreated battle-scenes from the Middle Ages with informative, well-researched history.

Our lead book review this month deals with the rarely discussed subject of desertion. Charles Glass's book, *Deserter: the last untold story of the Second World War*, focuses on three soldiers who deserted for different reasons – and with very different outcomes. Mark Corby is impressed with Peter Hart's new book, *The Great War*, and Jules Stewart looks at Con Coughlin's *Churchill's First War*, detailing Churchill's experiences fighting in India in 1897.



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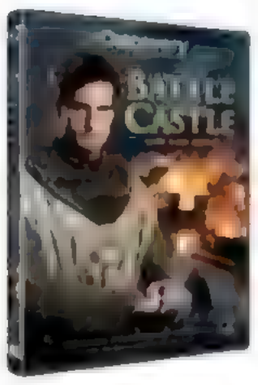
DVD

BATTLE CASTLE with Dan Snow

GO ENTERTAIN
20 MAY
£13.99



This exciting new documentary follows Dan Snow as he visits some of the most renowned castles in the world, from Krak des Chevaliers, Dover Castle, and Malbork Castle to Château Gaillard and Málaga Castle.

We start at the magnificent Krak des Chevaliers in Syria, where Snow focuses on the materials, the landscape, and the techniques that influence the building of such a stronghold. Home to the Knights Hospitallers in 1142, the castle dominated the surrounding area, its walls withstanding Muslim raids and sieges for much of the 13th century. The narrative is cleverly punctuated by well-shot battle re-enactments, and the inclusion of working Medieval siege weaponry is a welcome addition to the first episode. Seeing the trebuchet being grappled with by seven men gives you a sense of how difficult these machines would have been to operate.

Episode two joins Louis VIII's French Army arriving at Dover to seize the English Crown from King John. Men charging, men impaled on spikes, fire, smoke, and swordfights set the scene for this next instalment. Snow provides the historical context, before exploring how the castle was created. We are told of the challenges faced by Maurice, the mysterious, well-paid engineer who designed it, who struggled sourcing the materials in a land of soft chalk. Moving graphics and maps help the audience understand exactly how formidable the castle's defences were. The Averanches Tower was manned by crossbowmen, the outer towers were rounded to avoid undermining, and the perrier anti-personnel weapon – a live firing of which we are also treated to – rapidly fired deadly projectiles.

The series follows this effective formula for the remaining episodes. Pivotal moments in the castles' histories are selected to create a feeling of suspense. Very often, the battle around which each episode centres is a key point in the country's history, the outcome of which rides on whether or not the castle can hold.

The three-disc, six-episode series culminates at the fortifications of Malága, where a vast Christian army is hoping to storm the Muslim-held dual strongholds. This final episode runs more like a film with running commentary from Snow and excellent re-enactment. Too many documentaries of this genre tend to ham up the re-enactments, to repeat the few good bits over and over, or to settle for mediocre effects. *Battle Castle* does not fall victim to any of these pitfalls, managing to combine a filmic setting with an authoritative voice.

This is a must-see for the Medievalist, and is highly recommended for any armchair historian. The history is well-researched and accurate, the style ticks all the right boxes, and the cinematography is superb: stunning shots of the castles, with apocalyptic sweeping clouds providing the backdrop. Dan Snow is proving himself to be an entertaining and engaging presenter, passionate about his subject-matter and eager to get involved with all aspects of each castle's design and defences. *GC*

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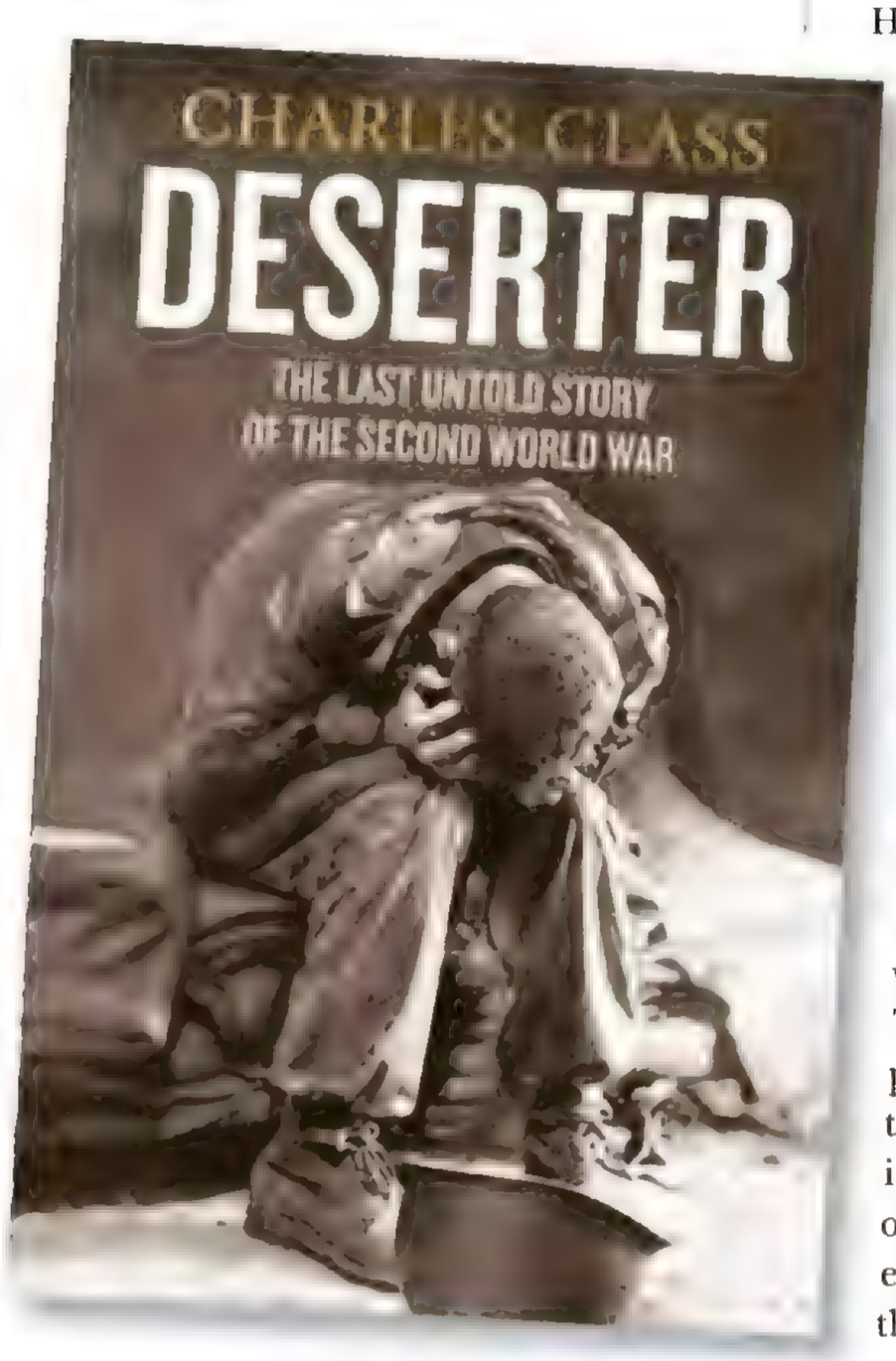
BOOKS

DESERTER: the last untold story of the Second World War

Charles Glass
HarperPress, £25
ISBN 978-0007345922

Nearly 70 years since the end of the Second World War, desertion is still a subject rarely discussed or even acknowledged. According to author Charles Glass, some 100,000 British troops, nearly 50,000 Americans, and thousands of Commonwealth soldiers were lost to desertion. Loss on this scale obviously had a significant impact on the conduct of the war. But while 49 Americans were sentenced to death for desertion, only one, Eddie Slovik, was actually executed. As Glass suggests, had Slovik's court-martial and subsequent appeal not occurred during the winter of 1944-1945, when US forces were heavily engaged in Belgium, he too might have escaped the death penalty. But the Battle of the Bulge was not a time for clemency.



The book centres on the stories of three soldiers: John Bain of the Gordon Highlanders, and Americans Steve Weiss and Alfred T Whitehead. Bain deserted in North Africa, and ended up at the Mustafa Detention Barracks near Alexandria; Weiss fought with the French Resistance; and Whitehead became a gangster in post-liberation Paris. Each soldier's story is very well detailed and, through their experiences, Glass seeks to identify the motives behind their desertion in an attempt to explain desertion in its broader context. The author is quick to stress that desertion and cowardice are not the same thing, exemplified by the story of a young British officer who deserted his training post in Cairo to join the fighting at El Alamein.

Glass paints a vivid picture of the Mustafa Barracks, which featured a 60-foot hill built by the inmates. The hill came to symbolise everything the inmates (and some guards) despised about British military justice. Joseph Heller observed something similar with the US Army in Italy, leading him to conceive the character of Private Wintergreen in *Catch-22*.

The author underlines what was often a fine line between being AWOL and desertion, stressing that in many instances desertion was temporary. He also discusses the varying degrees of desertion – from the rear areas, the front-line, and, most seriously, in the face of the enemy – and the resulting punishments dealt out.

Of course, not everyone who deserted did so to escape the fighting. There were a number of other reasons why soldiers were lured away from the action. The attraction of the local female population was one, but so too were the opportunities the war presented in the form of the black-market and organised crime. By May 1944, for example, Naples was jointly run by the Allied armies, the Mafia, and

According to the author, some 10,000 British troops, nearly 50,000 Americans, and thousands of Commonwealth soldiers were lost to desertion during the Second World War.

Allied deserters. The latter controlled the black market in Allied supplies, stealing and then selling on, sometimes back to their original owners.

Naples was the crime-centre of liberated Italy – prostitution, back-marketing, racketeering, and looting were all rife, and deserters were at the heart of much of it. The impact of such criminal activities in Italy and then France is an overlooked aspect of the Allied war effort.

Low morale resulting from poor leadership and strategy, and tenacious German resistance, was another factor that led to thousands deserting the Allied forces in Italy. Come the Normandy Landings, attempts were made to avoid the levels of desertion that had plagued the Allied forces in Italy, with mixed success.

Glass is primarily a journalist and not a military historian. So while the research of his main subjects is impressive, the more general or background military history seems less assured, and it is here that the occasional error or oversight appears.

David Flintham

The Great War, 1914-1918

Peter Hart
Profile Books, £25
ISBN 978-1846682469

This splendid book provides a masterly overview of the single most important event of the 20th century, namely the Great War of 1914-1918. It comes at an opportune time, just in advance of the national commemoration planned for next year, which will no doubt generate a plethora of literature devoted to every conceivable aspect of this terrible war.

Peter Hart has already established himself as an authority on this subject, particularly with his recent publications on Gallipoli and the Somme. In this work he has used his unique skill in selecting the most pertinent quotations – from the very highest sources to the lowest – to produce a truly magisterial account of the epic events that shaped this war.

Hart is no revisionist and this is not a sanctimonious tale of 'lions led by donkeys'. Nor does it seek to perpetuate some cherished myths that have over time coalesced from racial slander to established fact. Thus it may come as a complete surprise to many British readers that the French Army suffered a staggering 27,000 dead on 22 August 1914 during the all but forgotten Ardennes Offensive. Hart is similarly scathing about grossly exaggerated British accounts of derring-do at Mons and Le Cateau.

The central feature of Hart's argument is the paramount importance of the Western Front, and the need to find generals capable of fighting a brutal war of attrition – with no other alternative. Thus Haig and Foch, normally the butt of much ill-informed criticism, receive the praise they deserve. It may not have been pretty, but both shared the same conviction that the German Army had to be ground down on the Western Front and given no respite whatsoever, whatever the cost. Lesser men such as Lloyd George were appalled but ultimately acquiesced. Others, such as Jellicoe, suffered a near nervous breakdown, prompting an exasperated Haig to describe him as 'an old woman'.

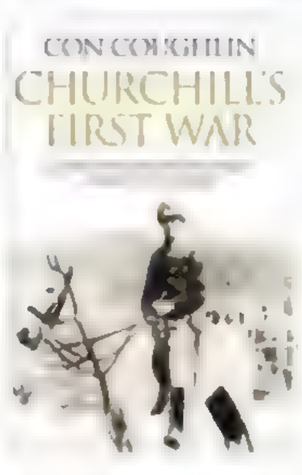
Other theatres of the war, with the exception of the outstanding yet minuscule and irrelevant African campaign of von Lettow-Vorbeck, are covered with equal panache. Thus the astonishing campaign on the Eastern Front, where the Kaiser's forces achieved a decisive victory over Romanov and, later, Bolshevik forces, is discussed in some detail. Sadly, the question of why the Germans did not seek a compromise peace in the West at that stage is not examined.

The fiasco of Gallipoli is succinctly described, again its deluded protagonists could not acknowledge that victory would come only on the Western Front. Ancillary campaigns in Salonika, Mesopotamia, Italy, and Ottoman Palestine are also evaluated, together with the somewhat uninspiring naval war that culminated in the disappointing Battle of Jutland. Unfortunately, the full impact of the naval blockade on Germany and its place, exaggerated or otherwise, in the final victory is not discussed. Nor are any of the financial implications of the war, particularly the massive loans made by the United States to Great Britain, much to the alarm of the head of the Federal Reserve, Paul Warburg. Nonetheless, this is a very impressive book, written in a fluent style, complete with excellent maps and illustrations.

Mark Corby

Churchill's First War: young Winston and the fight against the Taliban

Con Coughlin
Macmillan, £25
ISBN 978-0230758513



The intriguing subtitle of Con Coughlin's book tells us something about the futility of waging war in Afghanistan. The story deals with Winston Churchill's 1897 Malakand Campaign on the North-West Frontier of British India, for all intents and purposes an appendage of Afghanistan surgically separated from that country by the ill-conceived and largely ignored Durand Line.

The enemy Churchill fought as a young cavalry officer were in effect the great-great-grandfathers of the tribesmen who are today stubbornly holding off the combined forces of the US, Britain, and more than 30 other Western nations.

Coughlin reflects on Churchill's opinions regarding the war against the Pashtun tribesmen. 'Financially it is ruinous. Morally it is wicked. Militarily it is an open question, and politically it is a blunder.' Some of these assertions should arguably be taken as half-truths, for no matter how striking the political and military similarities to today, Churchill's war took place more than a century ago, and circumstances have changed. In 1897, Britain was struggling against a threat to British domination of India, a full-scale tribal uprising against a colonial master. This is not what is happening today in Afghanistan, where the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are fighting to create a framework for the nation's stability and security.

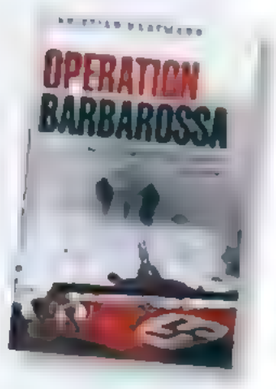
The author is right to point out that Britain's earliest failings in Afghanistan were due to a callous disregard for the people of that country. Indeed, Churchill himself shared that contempt for what he termed a 'pestilential race'. But he did express the need to keep the tribes sweet when he said 'silver makes a better weapon than steel', a fact ISAF have now come to understand as a key component of their counter-insurgency strategy.

Coughlin brings to light not only Churchill's dogged determination to get his way, 'his all-consuming passion to make his name', but also the fact that the Malakand Campaign marked 'a pivotal moment in Churchill's rise to greatness'. The author says this makes it all the more surprising that this period in Churchill's life tends to be overlooked. Yet his dispatches to the *Daily Telegraph* drew favourable attention from highest Establishment quarters, including the Prince of Wales. The articles also brought him a commission to write his first book, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force*, which catapulted him into the public's eye.

Coughlin must be commended for bringing to light a neglected yet crucial episode in Churchill's career, which another biographer contends 'formed his approach to war and laid the foundation of his path to political glory'. The book also stands as a well-documented, detailed account of a campaign at risk of fading from historical memory. The Malakand Campaign provides insight into the current conflict in Afghanistan, and indeed on the North-West Frontier where Churchill fought, and where the Pakistani military has, in recent years, felt a good deal of pain.

Jules Stewart

ON THE HORIZON



Operation Barbarossa: Nazi Germany's war in the East, 1941-1945
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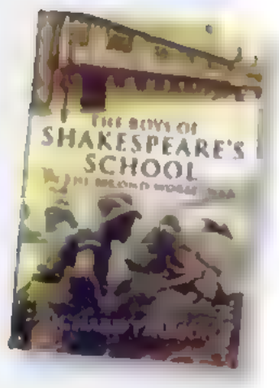

The Boys of Shakespeare's School in the Second World War
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Arthur Aldridge with Mark Ryan
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Dingo Firestorm: the greatest battle of the Rhodesian Bush War
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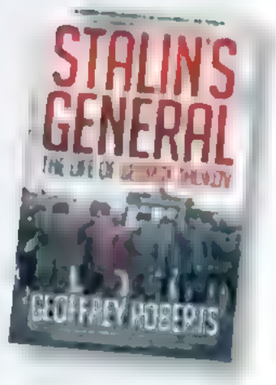


Stalin's General: the life of Georgy Zhukov
Geoffrey Roberts
Icon Books, £10.99
ISBN 978-1848315174
Using hundreds of documents from Russian military archives, as well as unpublished memoirs, Roberts presents the first definitive biography of Marshal Zhukov.

The Eagle has Fallen

Brian Young
FirstFilm Production, £7.99
ISBN 978-0957300408

The fate of the Ninth Legion of the Roman Imperial Army has been the subject of much debate and a number of novels since the publication of Rosemary Sutcliffe's *The Eagle of the Ninth* in 1954. The legion, known to have been stationed in Britain during the 1st century AD, disappeared from a list of imperial legions inscribed in the second half of the 2nd century AD. This new novel theorises the destruction of the legion during a conflict in northern Britain under the emperor Hadrian.

Yet there are a number of problems with this theory. In AD 9, three Roman legions were famously destroyed by Germanic tribes in the Teutoburg Forest. How could the destruction of another legion be kept so secret that it was not recorded in contemporary sources? A serious insurgency did erupt in northern England soon after the accession of Hadrian. However, the known casualties belonged to auxiliary units rather than the legions.

The construction of Hadrian's Wall was not a reaction to the loss of a legion. Riddled with gates, the structure could not have been an impermeable barrier to the northern tribes. Convincing evidence points to the later presence of a detachment of the Ninth Legion in Nijmegen in Holland after the British conflict. Furthermore, inscriptions record a number of officers who must have served in the legion later than the period in question.

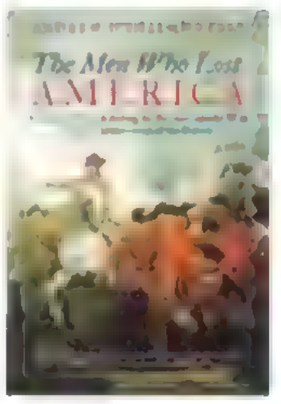
The most likely scenario is that the Ninth Legion was transferred from Britain to another province. It may have been involved in dealing with the Bar Kokhba revolt in Judaea (130-136 AD), which resulted in major losses for Roman forces. As a result of a high level of casualties, it is feasible that the legion was disbanded and the soldiers absorbed into other units.

Nevertheless, this novel is an exciting work of fiction. Its vibrant depiction of life in the Roman army is compelling. Brian Young should be congratulated on conducting a significant amount of historical research to support his narrative. Regrettably, his theory on the disappearance of the Ninth Legion is ultimately unconvincing.

Jonathan Eaton

The Men Who Lost America: British command during the Revolutionary War and the preservation of the Empire

Andrew O'Shaughnessy
Oneworld Publications, £30
ISBN 978-1780742465



In what historians term 'the long 18th century', Britain fought three major wars against France – yet only in America did Britain suffer humiliating defeat. As a result, the American Revolution has never loomed large in British history syllabi, indeed the scholarly biographies of the British commanders are more often than not written by Americans.

Yet in purely military terms, the American War of Independence was not the disaster of popular perception – Britain won the majority of the major battles and still held key strongholds during the peace negotiations. And at the same time as Britain was losing its grasp of America, it was strengthening its hold elsewhere – India, Canada, and in the Caribbean.

The blame for the loss of America has traditionally been laid at the feet of British commanders and politicians whose arrogance and incompetence was the cause of humiliating defeat. O'Shaughnessy sets out to demolish this myth through the biographies of the ten who were in charge: George III, Lord North, General Sir William Howe and his brother Admiral Lord Richard Howe, John Burgoyne, Lord Germain, Sir Henry Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, Admiral Sir George Rodney, and the Earl of Sandwich.

In what is a first-rate study, scholarly, yet accessible, he highlights the fact that while the British army was a formidable weapon of conquest, it was too small to be an effective army of occupation. The British were overstretched, forced to divide their forces and suffered significant logistical problems. Added to this was the fact that several British commanders had a degree of affinity for the colonists (many had fought alongside the British during the Seven Years' War). The French contribution is also crucial and, at sea, perhaps decisive.

So while Britain did not entirely lose the American War of Independence and was not totally defeated, Britain still lost America. Not as the result of incompetence, but because she did not have the will, the ruthlessness, and the determination to keep it.

David Flintham

Just Published!

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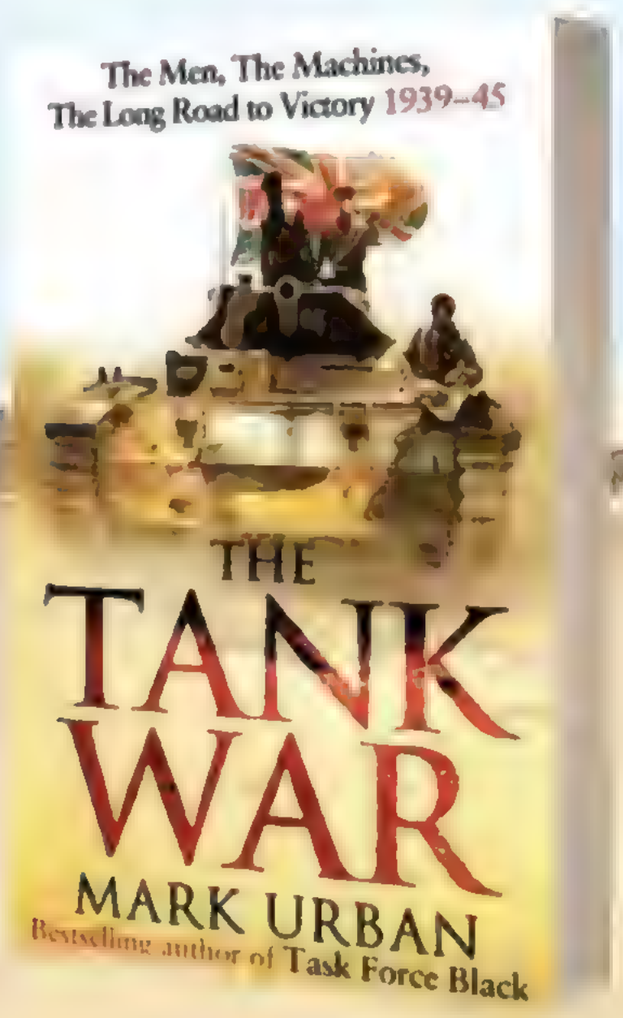

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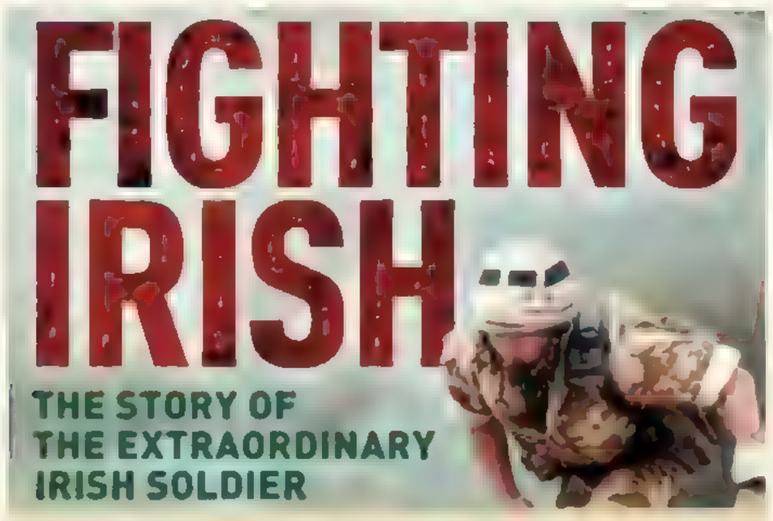

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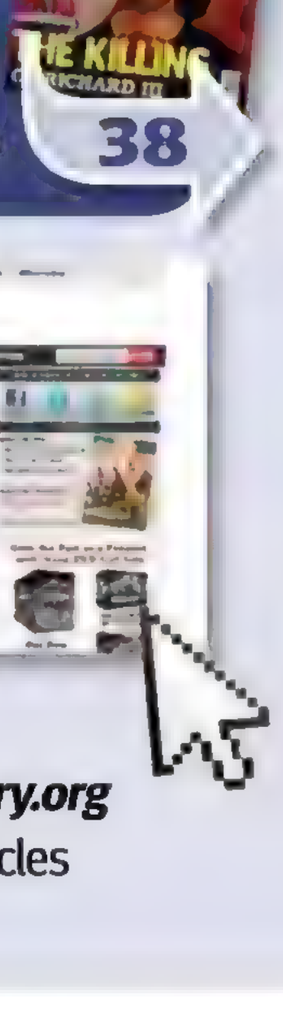

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THE NEXT ISSUE IS ON SALE
11 JULY 2013

Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo museum

This museum is located in the fortifications that were built in 1874 to reinforce France's coastal defence. Bastion 32 served as the headquarters for the French and Allied forces during the Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo.
The Mémorial du Souvenir tells the incredible story of the battle and of the evacuation of more than 338.000 allied soldiers from the « Pocket of Dunkirk ».

In the museum, you will discover a rich exhibition of maps, pictures and both allied and German military material. Scale models of the sites of the operation, uniforms and weapons complete the collection.
A film using dramatic period footage, with a duration of approximately 15 minutes, gives an excellent overall view of the events of May-June 1940.

Open every day from 1st April to 30th September, from 10am to 12 from 2 to 6 pm.

2013 Admission prices
Adults: € 4 - Groups: € 3,5 - School groups: € 3

Memorial du Souvenir
Courtines du Bastion 32
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A16 exit 60 - GPS : 51°2'46.31"N – 2°22'52.25"E
Bookings
Office du Tourisme
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production@ot-dunkerque.fr
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History

On the 10th May 1940, German army groups B (northern Holland, Luxembourg and Belgium) in response to the Allied armies who advanced to the river Dyle in counter-attack. At the same time, German army groups A burst through the Ardennes and advanced very quickly towards the French coast and the English Channel.
By taking Sedan on the Meuse and Cleves, the German armoured divisions succeeded in surrounding the allied troops in the so-called « sickle cut ».
Holland capitulated on the 15th May, and Brussels on the 28th. Facing an enemy which was better equipped and which outnumbered the allied troops, retreat was the only option for the French armies and the British Expeditionary Force, that had been stationed on the continent since the beginning of the « Phoney War » in September 1939.

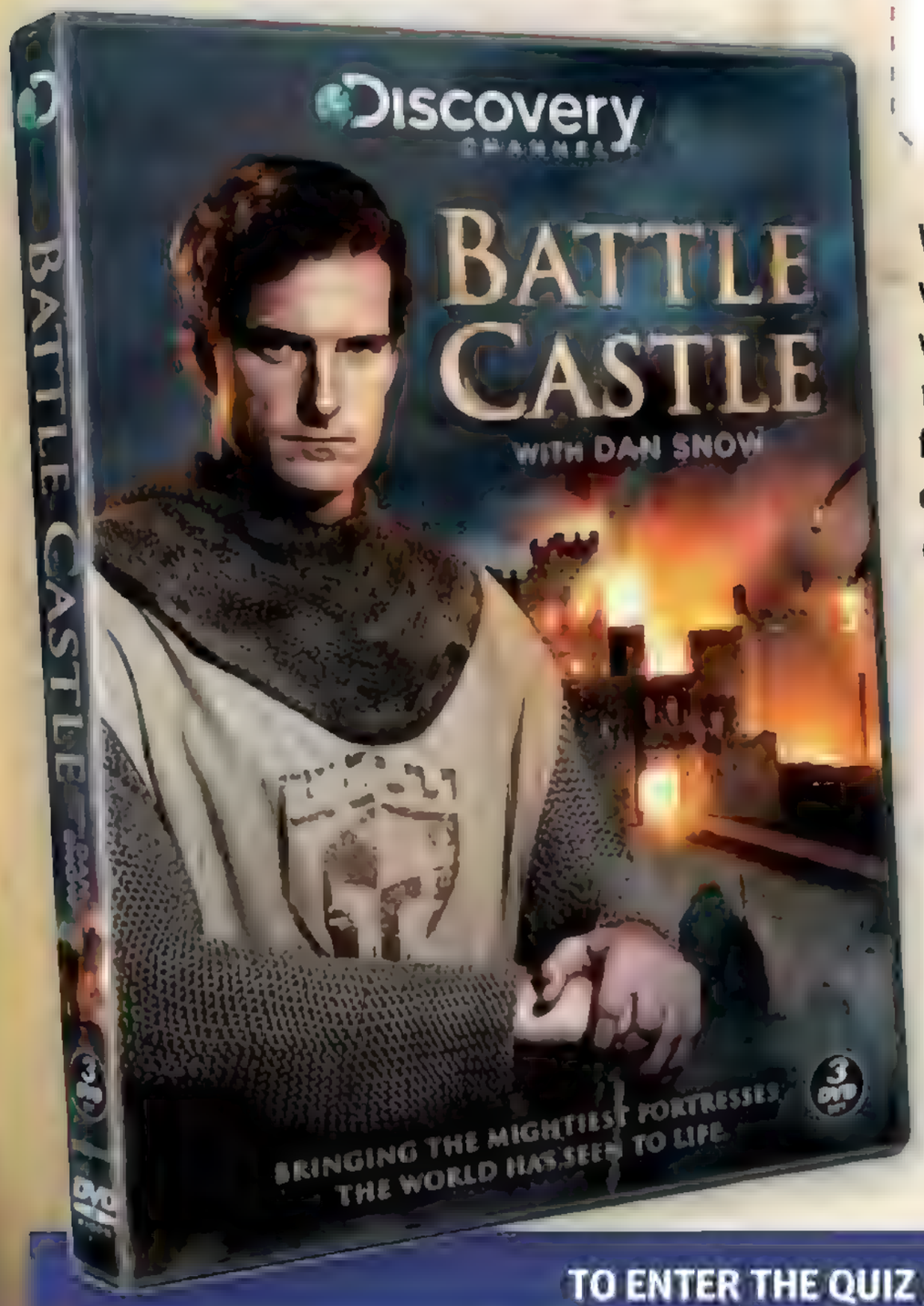
15 000 French and British troops defended a narrow perimeter to prevent the Germans from taking Dunkirk. Thanks to the sacrifices of these soldiers, a ragtag fleet of around 1400 mainly British, but also French, Belgian and Dutch ships, succeeded in rescuing more than 338 000 soldiers from the beaches and the eastern mole.
On the 4th June, at dawn, the last ship left Dunkirk and the Germans entered the city that was in ruins. The success of the biggest evacuation in military history, a « Disaster turned to Triumph », gave a great boost to British morale, and is now seen as a major turning point of World War II.

COMPETITION

MILITARY HISTORY MONTHLY

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer the following questions at ***www.military-history.org:***

1. In which city is Gibralfaro located?
2. In which year in the 12th century was Krak des Chevaliers given to the Knights Hospitallers?
3. In which country is Guédelon castle?



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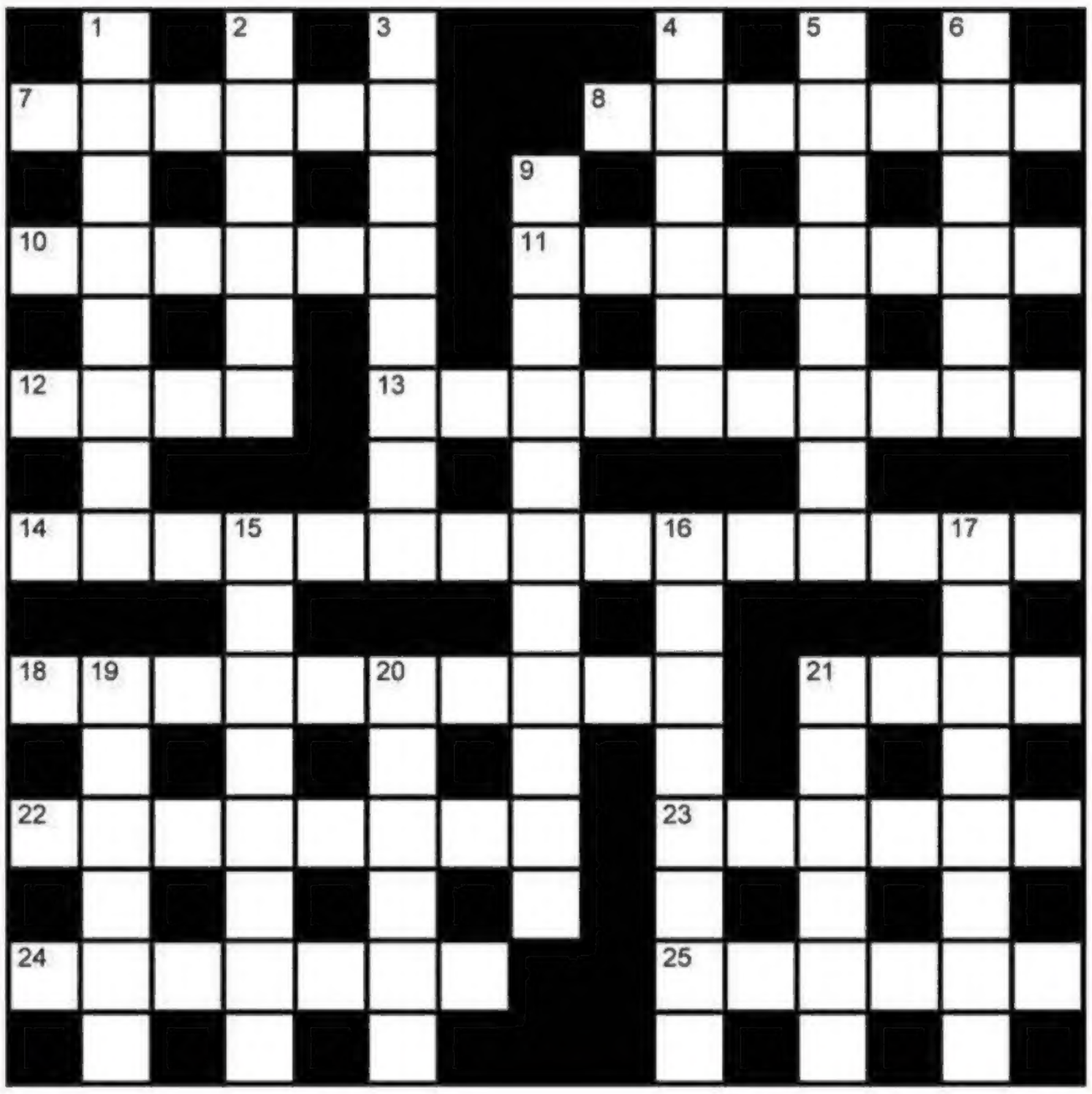

MHM CROSSWORD

Test your military history knowledge in our regular crossword.
The answers will be revealed in next month's issue of *MHM*.

ACROSS

7 Spanish city taken by Nationalist forces in February 1937 (6)

8 Armoured personnel carrier, in production from the early 1950s (7)

10 Town in western France, site of a battle in 1793 during the War in the Vendée (6)

11 US battleship sunk during the attack on Pearl Harbor (8)

12 William Benjamin ___, US general, commander of the 25th Infantry Division in the Korean War (4)

13 ___ Regiment of Foot, the Green Howards, now amalgamated into the Yorkshire Regiment (10)

14 Film of 1969 in which Laurence Olivier plays Air Chief Marshal Dowding (6, 2, 7)

18 British army rank equivalent to Flying Officer in the RAF (10)

21 Pacific island captured by Japanese forces in December 1941 (4)

22 Ancient Greek soldier and historian whose writings include *Hipparchicus* ('Guide for a Cavalry Commander') (8)

23 French-built missile which became widely known during the Falklands War (6)

24 Irish town, site of a siege and battle in the early 16th century during the Nine Years' War (7)

25 ___ and Sutherland Highlanders, formed in 1881 by amalgamation of the 91st and 93rd Regiments of Foot (6)

DOWN

1 Battle of the Peninsular War, fought in July 1809 (8)

2 Orderly serving a British military officer (6)

3 ___ Massacre, a guerilla attack led by William Quantrill on a Kansas town in August 1863 (8)

4 Emilio ___, Brazilian artillery commander, and later general, who played a significant role in the Triple Alliance War against Paraguay (6)

5 Central Asian city destroyed by Genghis Khan (8)

6 Item of armour, such as a bascinet or burgonet (6)

9 Son of Edward III, who, with his brother, the Black Prince, took part in the siege and capture of Limoges (4, 2, 5)

15 Battle in 721 where the Ummayad Muslims were defeated by an army led by Odo the Great (8)

16 Castle on the Isle of Bute captured by Robert the Bruce in 1311 (8)

17 Queen who, with her husband Ferdinand, completed the reconquest of Spain in 1492 (8)

19 Ancient kingdom in the Caucasus, fought over by the Byzantines and Sassanids (6)

20 John ___, Confederate general, at the start of the war lieutenant-colonel of the 27th Virginia Infantry (6)

21 ___ Carew, vice-admiral who died when the *Mary Rose* sank in July 1545 (6)

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WINNER:

Simon Cowell's latest boyband 'Hillbilly Hunks' was less than successful!
Jason Ollis

RUNNERS-UP:

yeah, errr, we may need more than one gun....
Andy W

Queen, circa 1861
John Doherty

Think you can do better?

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ANSWERS — **JUNE ISSUE | MHM33**

ACROSS 1 Hussars, 5 *Iliad*, 9 Lhasa, 10 Leicester, 12 Guise, 13 Duellists, 14 Vernon, 15 Ernest, 17 Scania, 20 Massie, 24 Champlain, 26 Valmy, 27 Erpingham, 28 Larne, 29 Genoa, 30 Grenade. **DOWN** 1 Hulagu, 2 Seafire, 3 Agamemnon, 4 Saladin, 6 Lyell, 7 Artists, 8 Bireme, 11 Ross, 16 Nashville, 18 Chapple, 19 Apache, 20 Mons Meg, 21 Illyria, 22 Acre, 23 Cyrene, 25 Pongo.

Dial 'M' for muddle

Above Painting by Willy Stöwer of a U-boat sinking a troop transport ship.

Two of the three M-class submarines that the Royal Navy launched between 1916 and 1919 were lost with all hands. Both sank just off the English coast. In peacetime. Literally designed by committee, from the outset the role for these huge submarines was unclear – and it changed over time. Under the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that disaster ensued.

The original concept was a knee-jerk reaction to reports of German U-cruisers: submarines armed with 5.9-inch guns, which would surface to sink merchant ships with gunfire. So, in 1916, the Admiralty decided to introduce a submarine armed with one 12-inch gun of the type carried by Formidable-class battleships. As a result they were big vessels, 300 feet long and weighing nearly 1,600 tonnes.

Initially intended for use as monitors, to bombard targets on shore, their role then changed to sea combat because the huge gun would have a greater effective range than a torpedo. They would rise to periscope depth, fire one round (the gun could not be reloaded while the boat was submerged) and dive out of harm's way. Since most battleships had eight guns which they would fire repeatedly, it is not clear how a single gun fired once could have any significant effect.

> Her massive gun turret was sheared off and she sank with all hands.

Although launched in 1917, HMS *M1* never saw action. The navy feared that the Germans might retaliate by arming U-boats with equally large guns, which rather calls into question the logic of building her in the first place.

Below HMS *M2* and her Sea Plane.

Two more M-class boats were built and launched after the war.

While on exercise off the coast of Devon in 1925, HMS *M1* was accidentally rammed by a merchant vessel, the SS *Vidar*, while submerged. Her massive gun turret was sheared off and she sank with all hands. Incredibly, the collision was so light that the captain of the *Vidar* was unaware that he had hit another vessel, a fact that highlights what a weak point the gun must have been.

Following the Washington disarmament treaty, which limited submarine guns to a maximum of 8-inch calibre, both HMS *M2* and *M3* had their 12-inch guns removed, and *M2* had her conning tower converted to a hangar, from which a seaplane could be catapulted. This could be retrieved by crane once its reconnaissance mission was completed.

In 1932, during trials in Lyme Bay, HMS *M2* sank with all hands. All we know for certain is that the hangar doors were open and the boat flooded. Whether they were not fully closed before diving or opened too soon on surfacing remains a mystery.

HMS *M3*, meanwhile, had been converted into an experimental mine-layer in 1927. She was able to lay 100 mines using a conveyor belt system, a task which she seems to have conducted successfully. However, she was taken out of service in April 1932, three months after her sister-ship sank. Fortunately, by the 1930s, the Admiralty had developed a much clearer strategy for submarine operations and future classes, such as the S, T, and U, proved successful throughout the Second World War and continued in service for decades.

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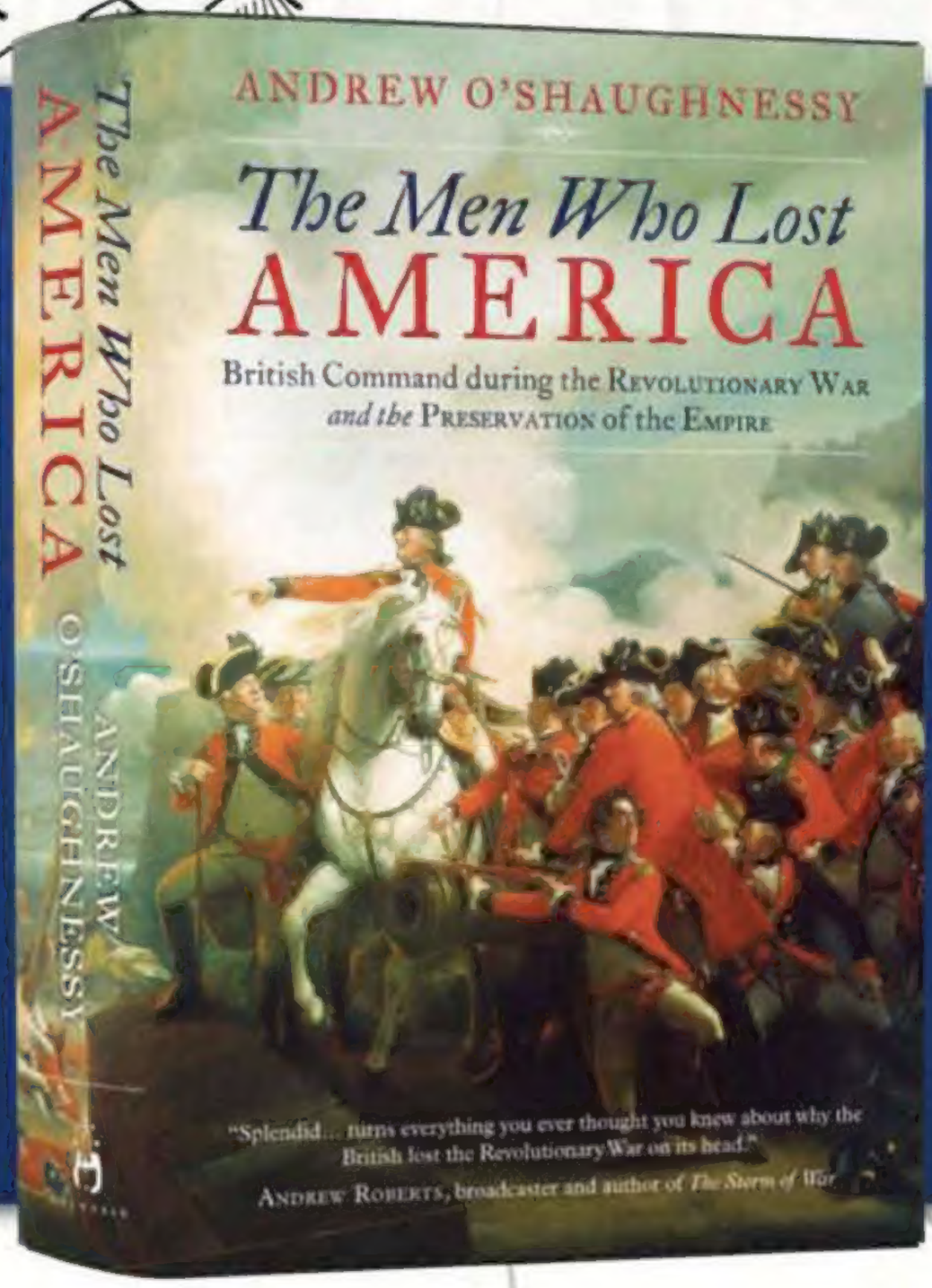
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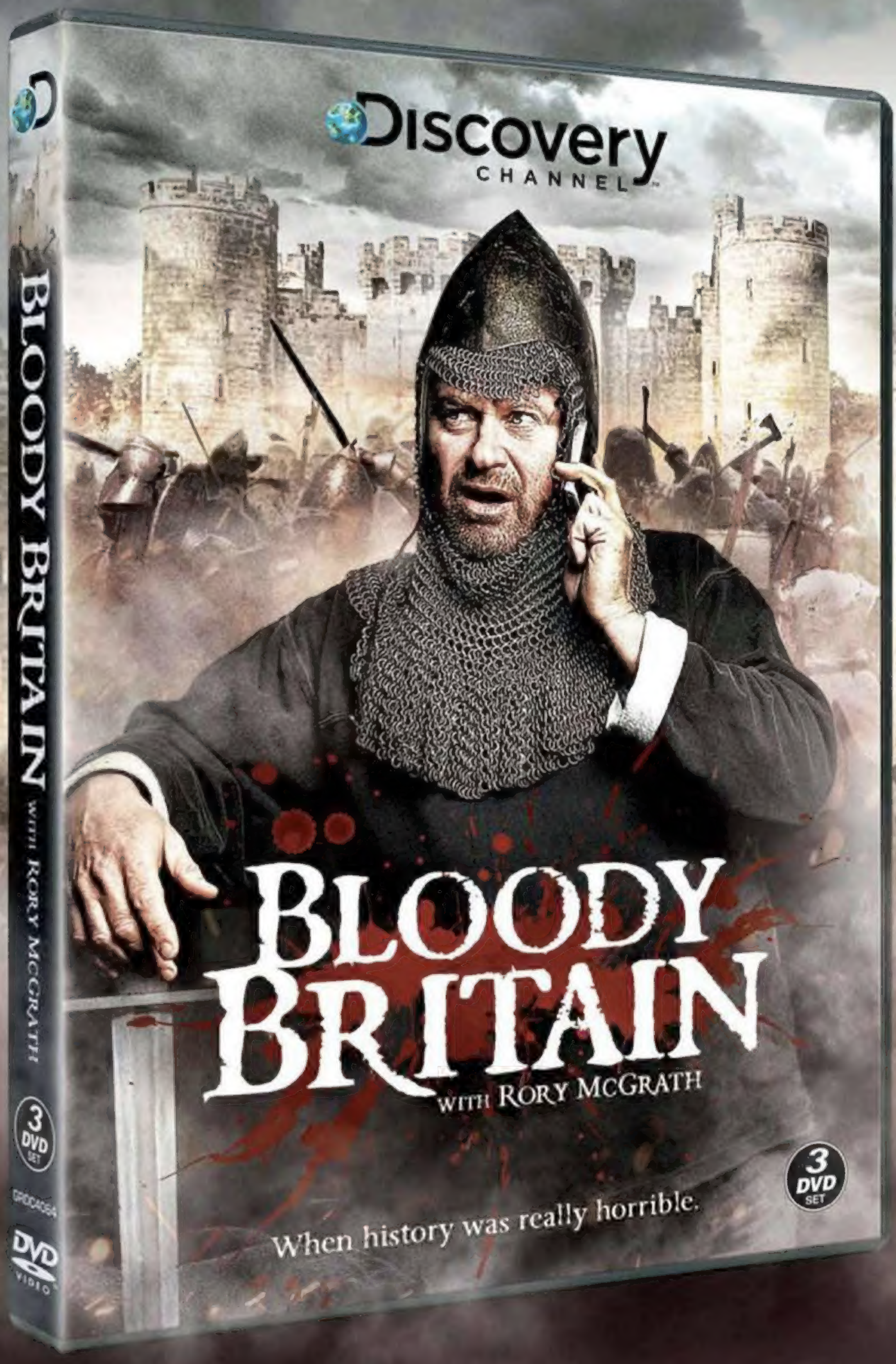

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